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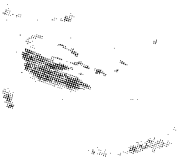
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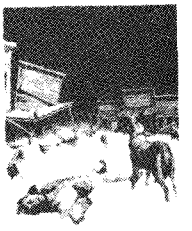
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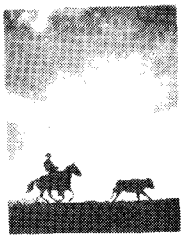
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From The Editor

Many places in the West are impressive. Who can forget actually seeing Mount Rushmore in South Dakota for the first time, after seeing so many photos of it? Who is not impressed with the majesty of Wyoming's Grand Teton mountain range? Who can help but marvel at the deep blue of Oregon's Crater Lake or Nevada's Lake Tahoe? Who has passed California's Mount Shasta without taking a second look?

My mother once spent a week with me touring San Francisco and thought the only thing really worth seeing was the Golden Gate Bridge. It is impressive.

Some cities of the West also are impressive. Santa Fe, New Mexico, with its warm ambience of art and architecture. Jackson Hole, Wyoming, because I remember what it was before it became a mecca for young people. San Antonio, Texas, which not only has the Alamo—a place everyone who loves the West must see—but that exciting riverwalk where young and old mingle in the shadows of history.

Many other places are equally impressive, Deadwood, Leadville, Bannack, Yellowstone, Yosemite, Devil's Tower, Tombstone, Telluride and Temecula. A place that surprises me, because I was not even prepared to be impressed, is Guthrie, Oklahoma.

It's only thirty miles from here but the demands of magazine editorship have allowed me only three visits. On each visit I learn more and am even more impressed. There's an excellent account of the history of Guthrie, Oklahoma's territorial and first state capitol in this issue, so I won't go into that here.

Ludd Lentz, whose family has long been associated with Guthrie, has not only provided the historical account but from his own extensive collection has given us some great early photos of this pioneering place.

Lentz established the printing museum in Guthrie, one of two major museums in the town, as a major tourist attraction. He is now in the real estate business but history remains his first love and perhaps we can get him to write more about central Oklahoma history.

What amazes me is that there, near a major interstate highway (Interstate 35), is a city that time forgot. To step from your car at the curb in Guthrie is to step back in time 80 years. Those who built Guthrie at the turn of the century thought she would become a major city, because the capitol was there.

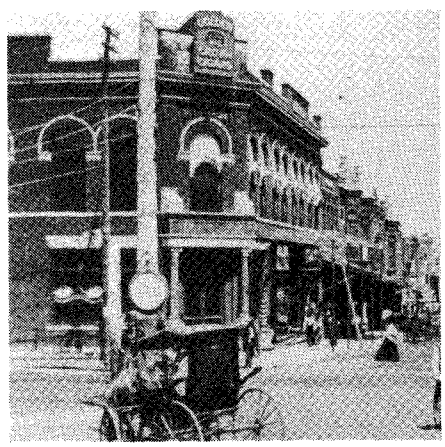
But Oklahoma City "stole" the capitol and Guthrie, with its huge Victorian business buildings and charming territorial-style homes, went into limbo. Today it is being rapidly restored and it will be only a matter of time before the American public finds out about Guthrie and makes it a tourist mecca in the same fashion that Tombstone and Virginia City, Montana, have become.

There also just happens to be one of the finest restaurants you'll ever visit in Guthrie, the Sand Plum. It can be found a couple floors up in a restored old business building called The Victor. The food is sumptuous and the view, of old Guthrie, is great.

Old Time Fare. Some readers tell us they miss the old pulp style writing of such men as Walt Coburn, Fred Gipson and J. Frank Dobie. They want stories like those men used to write.

But writers don't write like that today so we can't carry stories like that any more. Mainly writers do not write like that because they don't read anything that sounds like that and they no longer talk with people who talk like that.

Still, we occasionally get a piece where the arrows are whizzing, the gunsmoke is thick, the children are crying and the women are screaming in the midst of an Indian attack. There's action and excitement and you get the feel of actually being there.



Guthrie, Oklahoma Territory, about 1900.

Such a story is Mathias Fisch's "Ten Days to Die," the story of the battle at Fort Ridgely, Minnesota.

Pancho Villa. Carl Jameson has appeared on these pages before with stories which have elicted good reader response including one on a lost silver mine in Mexico and another about an inn where guests were murdered in Arkansas. One reader criticized his last story saying he had the geography all wrong. But Carl writes to assure me he did have the geography right and his critic was wrong. At least as far as the geography of Arkansas is concerned, I don't worry much about Carl's stories. He's chairman of the geography department at the University of Central Arkansas in Conway.

In this issue, he tells of the brutal Rodolpho Fierro, who fought with Pancho Villa. Fierro it seems found sport in killing helpless prisoners of war.

Special issue. This is our special guns, knives and mountain men issue and we've got good stories on all of them. Included are two accounts of the Bowie knife; a history of the Green River knife; a story on the Mississippi Rifle and we provide coverage of a modern-day mountain man rendezvous in California.

An explanation. Since moving the magazines to Oklahoma, readers may have noticed a few gliches. A missing "continued on page" line here, a few more than normal typographical errors. These result from having a new staff, new equipment and being in a new location. But we will get things straightened out and should be back to normal in an issue or two.

Hope you like the stories and will come back to this place for a visit next issue.

—Jim Dullenty

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TRUE WEST

November 1984 | Vol. 31, No. 10 | Whole No. 205

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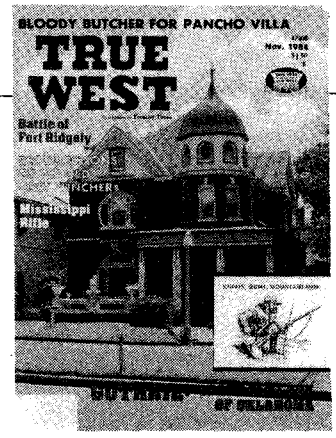

OUR COVER

The TRUE WEST staff has been much impressed with Guthrie, Oklahoma, the nearby city which is being restored to its turn-of-the-century elegance. Among the examples of fine Victorian architecture is this house in Guthrie. The photo was taken this summer by Production Manager Randy Clausen.

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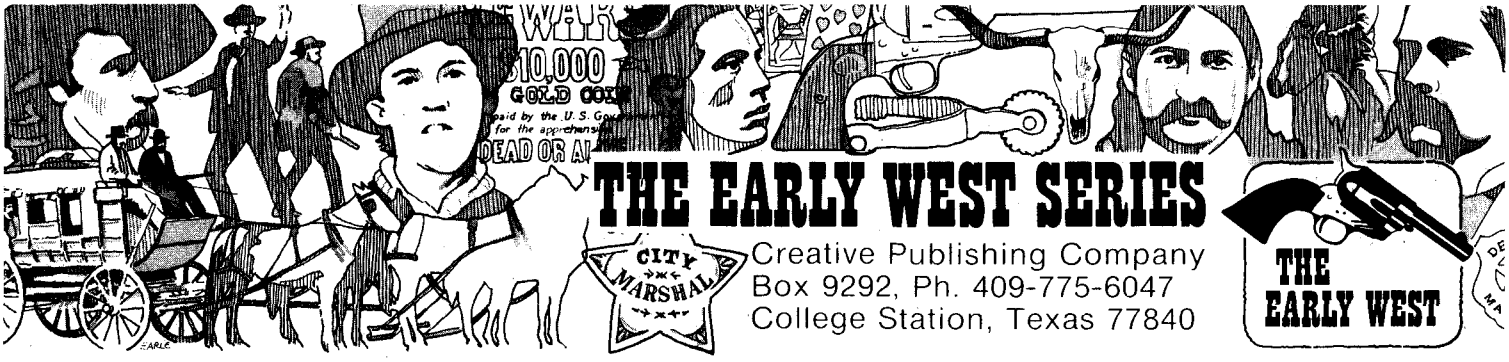

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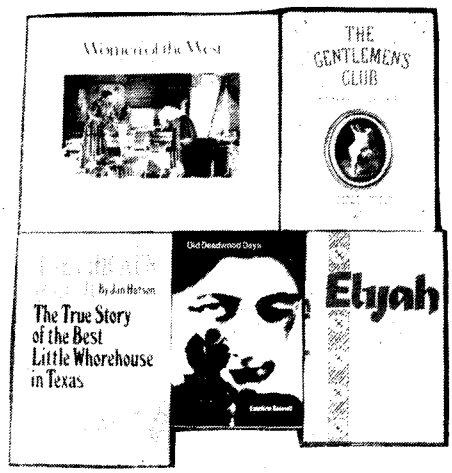

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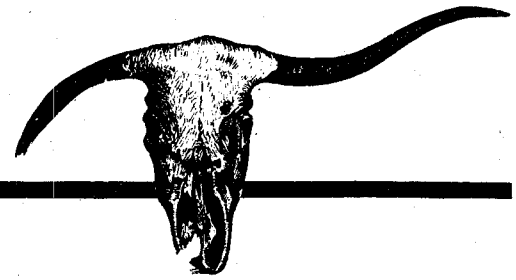


If you're thinking we have a lot of letters this time, you're right. We discovered we had a whole file of letters waiting to go in—a file that had been around since some time last year. We know you folks like letters, so we thought we'd make an effort this issue to get as many in as possible. We'll be doing this for the next couple of issues.—Editor.

Puma, If You Please

I take your magazines TRUE WEST/Frontier Times and OLD WEST, have for years. In one issue an article which talks about Jack O'Neil's experience with the panther is pure fiction. Evidently you didn't edit this article or you don't know anything about cats and lions.

There is no such cat in America called a panther, the word panther means "any large cat or cat-like animal." The American panther is a Puma; it is called a mountain lion or cougar most of the time. O'Neil talks about how mean and vicious the mountain lion is—not so. The mountain lion is horrified at the scent or sight of a man or a small dog barking. Jack should have used a bear instead of a panther for his fiction story.

I think I know as much about the puma as anyone, since I hunted them off and on for ten years with hounds, in and around Eagle Nest, New Mexico. I wrote a true story for Outdoor Life in the August 1965 edition called "Slap A Lion With Your Hat." A mountain lion is just a big, harmless pussy cat unless he is killing to eat or is cornered and has to fight; then he only uses his paws for slapping.

Several years ago, you had an article in one of your magazines where four men were hanged in an old barn in Ada, Oklahoma, about 82 years ago, around 1900. These hangings took place in my grandfather's barn. His name was Aaron Hart Linville. The article didn't give his name, just that they were hanged in a farmer's barn. My dad, Roland Hubert Linville, told me about this many times when I was a boy. I don't remember any on the names of the men who were hanged, but I do know it happened.

My grandfather went out to use the outhouse that morning just after daylight, but went to the barn instead. He just got his pants down, looked up and saw the four men hanging there. He said their necks looked to be a foot long. Grandmother said he was holding his pants up with his hands when he got to the house. I had this magazine, but our house burned and destroyed my copy.—**J.C. Linville, Rt. 1, Chickasha, OK 73018.**

Back In Time

Would you like to stand inside a railroad passenger car to "feel" that you are being robbed as the gunman barks orders to the passengers? Would you like to "feel" the explosion of an express car door as it is being robbed? Would you like to visualize an outlaw pointing his demanding weapon onto the head of the engineer?

Well, pack your saddle bag and head out to North Freedom, Wisconsin--a small town just west of Baraboo--where many railroad artifacts are located.

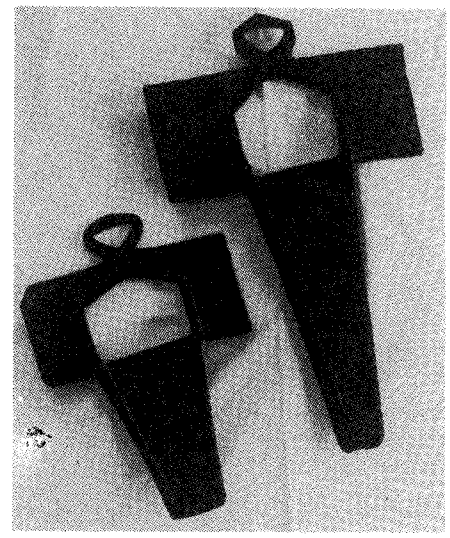
I visited this collection of railroad memorabilia. The depot museum was closed but just walking among the cars stirred visions of those rail giants streaming across the nation on the ribbons of steel. Numerous passenger cars, a pullman, engines, cabooses and hand cars are on the rail--some are housed in a huge shed. A wooden water tank is nearby that seems to be just waiting for an engine to switch into for a "drink." One can almost see a bunch of boys taking a lively dip during a hot summer play day.

There is much offered to visitors during the regular tourist season. The World Circus Museum--and the home of the Ringlings--is at nearby Baraboo.—**Oran Nunemaker, Box 601, Glasco, KS 67445.**

T-Shaped Mexican Stirrups

I have in my possession two metal T-shaped Mexican stirrups. The larger of the two weighs eight pounds, the smaller weighs four pounds. The larger stirrup, which is made of iron, is heavily embossed with many animals which appear to be mythical. This stirrup is ten inches wide and 18 inches in length. The small stirrup is eight inches wide and 12 inches long. It is embossed with an "S" shape design and is also of iron.

According to Paul A. Rossi, a director of the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma, the Mexican T-shaped stirrup evolved from the shoe stirrups which were used on the saddles during the period of Cortez' and Coronado's voyages into Mexico and later the American southwest.



Chester Topham's Mexican stirrups.

These heavy shoe stirrups could be and were used as weapons. The T-shaped stirrups were developed some time during the mid-16th century and were common throughout Mexico. While most of them show the work of the native Mexican craftsman, they are still examples of the traditional metal craftsmen in Spain during the Renaissance period.

I have been a subscriber to your periodical for many years and enjoy the pictures and articles very much.—**Chester A. Topham, 5019 Thurber Ln., Santa Cruz, CA 95065.**

Oregon Strong Man

I was 15 years old and weighed 110 pounds when I saw the strongest man. This was at Witty's Park in Milwaukee, Oregon, in 1921.

The man was demonstrating for the crowds. When I first saw him he had three big men on his shoulders on a yoke, one of them with his legs around his neck. He was moving around begging for two more men over 200 pounds to get on the seats fastened to his wrists. He promised he could lift one thousand pounds.

This went on for some time and he was unable to get two more big men to get on his wrists. I left to do something else, probably to set up pins in the bowling alley and make a couple of dimes.

Sometime later I went to the ball park and here was this little skinny man with three men on his shoulders. All were at least 200 pounds. He had finally been able to get two

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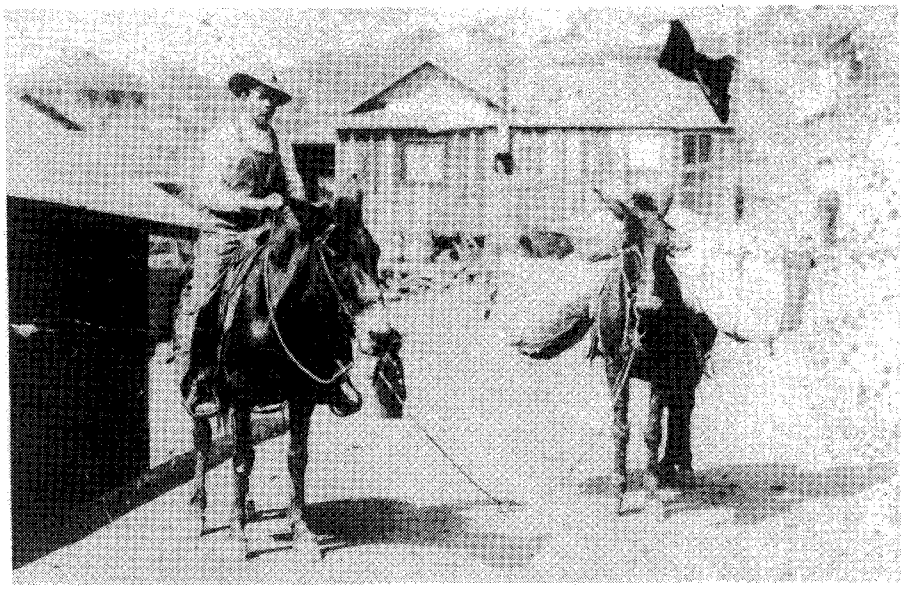
more big men on the stirrups he had on his wrists. He lifted them all off the ground.

I was standing next to him, he was my size and weight. He claimed 110 pounds. He said that he was gassed in the war and was never strong until he recovered in the hospital after the war.

I thought this was remarkable but I didn't realize I was seeing super strength until I started watching weight lifters compete in contests. Every time I saw weight lifters from that time on, it brought back memories of this little man.

Surely there must be someone still alive that saw this. Otto Witty may still be alive, he is about 78 or 79 now, I assumed they had hired this man as an attraction.

I hope this may reach someone with knowledge of this event.—**Earl W. Brawley, 1026 E. Simpson, Fresno, CA 93704.**



Wesley J. Rapier with mule, presumably packed right for this photo.

Carts Were Used

In your TRUE WEST magazine I saw pictures of some carts—old west transportation—well, it could very well be old south transportation. I can remember that kind of transportation myself. I am 60 years, plus.

One picture is very like the one I used to play with, my father built one just like that many, many years ago. Another is like one an old man used to drive to church, he had an old bull hitched to it. They are nothing new to me.

Those mules in one picture look so real life they put me in the mind of the old mules my father used to own many years ago. I don't remember the stage coach but I do remember the old log cabins very well. We had a corn crib built out of logs.—**Laura Stroh, Sanborn, Sanborn, ND 58480.**

Feared Apache Kid

I was born in Burnet County, Dec. 14, 1891, later lived in Lampasas, Colorado. Went to school in Lampasas. We made a lot of sorghum molasses every year.

I have lived in Arizona, Flagstaff 30 years and Camp Verde, 33. According to some of the old Apaches, the story of the Apache Kid is not completely told. The Apache Kid was not killed, according to an old Apache that worked for us for several years. The man died recently in or near Clarkdale, Arizona.

This is what he told me:

The Apache Kid was born near Globe, Arizona. He was a Tonto Apache. He stole women from other tribes but never one from the Tonto Tribe. Tontos lived mainly in the Tonto Basin.

"The Kid, in 1908, visited Camp Verde and in 1926 or 27 visited Clarkdale under disguise as a Mexican from Old Mexico. Al Siber was a true friend of all Apaches and his life ended at Roosevelt, a road construction accident."

George Hammond had gone to school and could use a typewriter and could write with pen very clearly. He was a Tonto Apache and saw the Kid when he was a small boy, while visiting his grandfather at Fossil Creek.

Apaches, other than Tontos, disliked and feared the Apache Kid; they could have turned the Kid in to officials but were afraid to.

If a Tonto was your friend (few were) he was your friend.

The above is correct according to what I think is true. I do not want to pose as a historian, nor do I crave publicity for George Hammond or myself.—**A.J. Mackey, Box 672, Camp Verde, AZ 86322.**

Miners' Ledgers

I have a number of ledgers that date back to 1860-1880. These ledgers are the records of gold miners that bought food stuffs and whiskey from the gold camp stores and traders. The names are all entered in the ledgers along with all the provisions they bought.

I always read your TRUE WEST and just maybe someone that reads Trails Grown Dim will be able to locate a relation that was in the mining camps here in California.—**E.F. Muster, Woodleaf Star Rt., Box 2030, Forbestown, CA 95941.**

Grocery Mule

My dad, Wesley J. Rapier, worked for the Phelps Dodge Mercantile Store in Morenci, Arizona, in 1913. He is delivering groceries in this picture.

He told me that if he didn't pack the mule right, it would throw the load off and he got to keep any damaged groceries. As times were hard then, he managed to load the mule wrong every now and then, and got the groceries that it damaged.

He passed away in 1971 at the age of 77.

In the Spring 1977 issue of OLD WEST, there is a picture of a man holding an old Winchester rifle, presented to City Marshal H.N. Brown. The article said this rifle was purchased for $13,000.

I have an 1873 model Winchester 44-caliber identical to that gun, it is in very good condition. On the barrel is printed Kings improvement, patented March 29, 1866 - October 16, 1860.

I would like to know the approximate value of this gun and where I can obtain some ammunition for it.

I have 190 issues of TRUE WEST/Frontier Times and OLD WEST magazines dating back through 1957.—**Harold N. Rapier, Box 788, Taylor, AZ 85939.**

Hosted Quantrill's Raiders

I was born in a half-dugout, June 25, 1907, on the staked plains of West Texas, near the town of Floydada. My father, John W. Roberson, and my mother, Minnie Lee (Ford) were pioneers from the state of Kentucky.

When my mother was young her family was the unwilling host of Quantrill's raiders. The elder Fords were forced to cook all their winter's meat supply and the dirty members ate with their hands and left filthy dirt streaks on the china-ware.

This insult angered the Fords so much they broke all the dishes soiled by the outlaws. Dishes were hard to come by those days, but they were too proud and irate to use them again.

I went to school in Siloam Springs, Arkansas, in a country school called "Jaybird" with a cousin of Jesse James -- June James. He was older than me and used to throw me down and sit on me just to hear me "beller." I finally got enough of it and tried to bite a plug out of his stomach. We got along better after that.

I can tell you why Henry Starr was killed

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in the bank at Harrison, Arkansas. He rode through the country south of Siloam horseback to Harrison. He went in a straight line and cut the fences of the hill farmers, letting out their cattle and horses. Somebody recognized him and turned him in by phone.

He would never have been caught and killed if he had fixed the fences he cut. They were waiting for him with shotguns.—**Carl L. Roberson, 405 S. Rose St., Anaheim, CA 92805.**

Wyoming Coal Slides

I read in your TRUE WEST about Brownsville, Colorado. Up around Meeteetse, Wyoming, my daddy showed us coal slides that had slid down the mountain several miles away; they took the town and people with them. I don't know whether I was looking southeast or in which direction, but the old timers would know the story. This was in the 1800s or the first of the 1900s.—**Dorothy Wilson, Box 930, Nicoma Park, OK 73066.**

Arkansas Valley Fair

I've been reading TRUE WEST a good many years now and like it very much.

My family came to Colorado from Oklahoma in 1909. I went to grade school in Rocky Ford and a country school called Newdale, east of Rocky Ford. We moved to Smith Canon in 1914 where my dad filed on a 320 acre claim.

In order to have some money coming in he went to work for Prairie Land & Cattle Company at JJ Ranch on Pickettwire River, Purgatory.

I had this picture of my dad, Jake, my brother, Buck, and me in 1913 in Rocky Ford, Colorado, just before the Arkansas Valley Fair. It was held in the last part of August or the first part of September. They gave away 80 tons of watermelons on that day. The fair is 115 years old, the oldest in Colorado.—**Joe Autry, RR 3, 509 Dixon, La Junta, CO 81050.**

Bitterroot Native

I married a girl from Woodside and lived in the Bitterroot Valley several years. I have been a reader of your magazines since 1959.

I packed horses in that country and northern Idaho several years. We hayed with horses all around Victor, worked with Clayse and Lee Payne. Did a lot of horse trading with Clyde Meliron who raised pinto horses and was good friend to old Jack Strole, the best horse doctor that ever lived. He had a cure for fistulas that died with him; sell him a fistula horse for five dollars and buy him back in a week for ten, he was cured.

I was raised in eastern Montana and grew up on broncs. I've ridden rough string, rodeoed some, wrangled dudes in California and raised cattle in later years.

Now we are trucking and wish for the good old days. I did a lot of breaking horses and selling and trading. If I live long enough for pack stories to go over I might write some, I had a lot of funny things happen on the trails.—**Earl M. Johnston, Rt. 3, Box 3514, Hermiston, OR 97838.**

Remembering Rodeos

As I take pen in hand I just can't think of words to explain what TRUE WEST has meant to me. It is a history of our forefathers long ago.

When I was young I worked in rodeos all over Oklahoma, Texas and Arkansas. Mostly saddle bronc, riding bare back on a bull or two when the money was right. I broke an arm, shoulder and my right leg in two places, but I think I'd do it all over again. I remember we had a one ton Model T Ford truck that we used to travel around in.

I knew most of the old time movie actors like Johnny MacBrown and I once played second guitar for Gene Autry.—**Jim D. Leonard, 1716 E. Market St., Box 16, Searcy, AR 72183.**

Lived Through History

I just don't know how to thank you for sending me the Western Calendars. My husband and myself reread your magazines over and over—once a month just doesn't seem enough. We are reading things in TRUE WEST that are published as history, that we have lived through.

Please keep up the good work, we enjoy every minute of every story and just wanted you to know what a great job you are doing. All our children and grandchildren read TRUE WEST, too.—**Mrs. R.C. Jolissaiut, 1001 Montgomery, West Monroe, LA 71291.**

Texas Masons

I wish someone would wake up the San Jose post office. I can remember when the mail delivery was almost a life or death deal, now it's a mess.

In Hunter's Frontier Times one story stated that General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna was a York Rite Mason. When the Alamo was taken he provided the Mason's wives with supplies, etc. Was Huston a Mason and was that why he was returned to Mexico when captured?

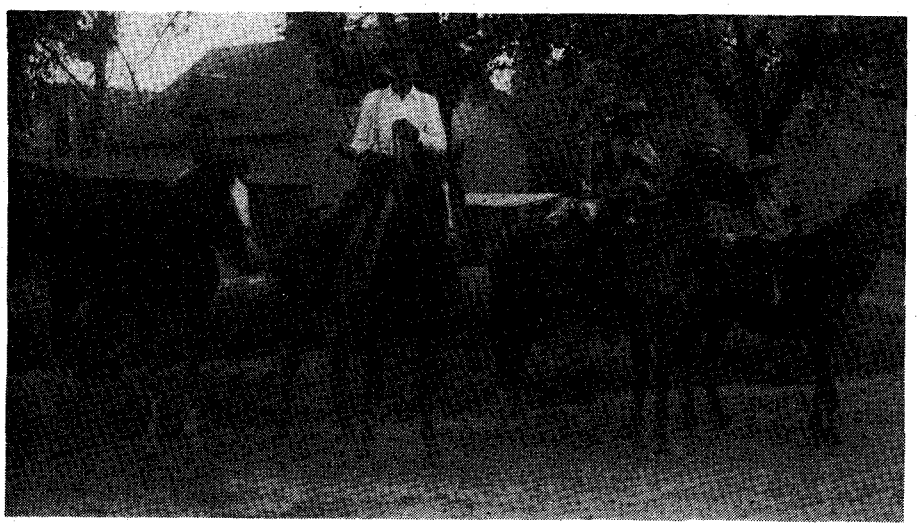
Being a member of the craft for 35 years, and a Scottish rite, it would be interesting to know what part the Masons played in Texas during those times. If I lived in Texas I would do some researching - maybe you could get someone to write up a good historical story.—**Quinn Smith, 3814 Dove Hill Rd., San Jose, CA 95121.**

Still Enjoying Life

I enjoy your TRUE WEST magazine so much, I've been subscribing to it for many years.

I'm the daughter of Howard and Kathryn Perry that were married in 1882, at Mellette, South Dakota, when South Dakota was still a territory. I'm the tenth child of eight boys and three girls.

When I was born we lived on a farm three miles north of Northville, South Dakota and about twenty miles south of Aberdeen. I could write a book of the many experiences I've gone through in this long lifetime of mine - 78 years. I have two sons, one retired and living near Anza, California, the other one



Jake, Buck and Joe Autry in 1913 at Rocky Ford, Colorado.

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lives in Electric City, Washington.

My husband Albert R. Dotson and I were married in Los Angeles, California, in May 1926. We both worked at a trucking company on Alameda Street. Lost my husband in 1976, after 50 years of marriage.

Now, with memories and many friends, nieces, nephews, grand- and great-grandchildren to keep me out of mischief, I remain a healthy senior citizen. Still take trips to Oregon and Washington every summer. I drive and love the beauty of outdoors.

I always read every TRUE WEST very thouroughly, hopefully my eyesight will always stay good, I enjoy reading so very much. I'm thankful for good eyesight, hearing and teeth, and intend to enjoy the use of them as long as the good Lord allows me to.—**Edith D. Dotson, 24771 N. Lake St. -343, Hemet, CA 92343.**

No Electricity in Montana

I read in your editorial that you were raised in western Montana and you mentioned you lived in the Bitterroot Mountains. I lived at Hamilton and up the west fork from Darby on Lost Horse Creek so I know quite a bit about that part.

When we lived on the west fork we didn't have any electricity and that was around 1955.

I like your magazines just fine. I have read a few stories about parts of the west where I lived and some things I knew about hit just right. I am an old cow poke, so circulated quite a bit in my younger days.

The best to your magazines.—**H.H. Pankratz, R 1, Box 129, Crawford, CO 81415.**

Gates and Fences

In the old days, roads on the plains ran directly from ranch, farm or small community to a larger town, our main local supply and trading center. The trails radiating from these boroughs were like the spokes from the hub of a wagon wheel. At the time there were practically no fences, it was nearly all "open range."

Later, farmers started fencing in their crops to try to keep the range cattle out; always across one of the direct routes to town. Sometimes these fenced in blocks were several sections in area and, as they were all rectangular, caused the traveler to go quite a bit out of their way to skirt the fenced in plot.

The nicer farmers put in gates at theses routes allowing their neighbors to cross their land in a straighter line. As we had to travel by wagon, buggy or "hoss back," this saving of travel was appreciated by most all of us. If a body left a gate open a time or two, he was liable to be met later with a shotgun and politely told to "go 'round." Fortunately, there were very few of these inconsiderate pilgrams.

In some seldom used places, the ones that knew of them could find "let downs," simply several (generally four) posts with the staples pulled and large nails driven in their stead. These nails were bent up into a hook to support the barbed wire in use. Sometimes there were two nails driven horizontally just above ground level to put the wires under for you to pass over.

Mostly though, these "let downs" were a three-man job. One to drive and two to stand on the wire at each side to hold it at ground level. Most cowboys stood on the wire and led their ponies over. I have seen (and owned) horses that would very carefully step over "let downs" held down only knee high.

Horses have to be well-trained to do this as they are naturally frightened of barbwire and will panic at the mere touch of it. When a mule or burro gets in the barb wire he will generally stand still till you get him out, (then probably kick the seat of your pants off for your trouble).

Ranchers made some ingenious and elaborate openings that could be opened and closed with out dismounting or getting out of the buggy or wagon. They used weights and pulleys, springs and even wheels to carry the weight of a large gate. Some of these could be operated from the car manually.

Later, when cars were used to go to town Saturday evening, cattle guards were installed on most cross fences. These were made by digging a pit across the road and putting a top on it made of two inch material on edge, spaced about two inches apart. A cow or horse would not walk on them and a car didn't even have to slow down. A gate was put by the side of most of them for live-stock travel.

Old belts, leather tugs, even old shoe soles were used as hinges and all kinds of cast-off farm machinery parts were used to make these passageways work. The top wire was sometimes used as a phone line (not so good in rainy weather).—**Carl L. Roberson, 405 S. Rose St., Anaheim, CA 92805.**

Danish Cowboy

I am writing in the hope that you may be able to assist me.

I got your address from a 1972 issue of TRUE WEST which was given to me by another Danish Cowboy fan, Hr. Kaj Andersen of Copenhagen, who is in fact the European Vice-President of the Alamo International.

I am an adult collector of Wild West models. Currently, in Europe, the only models available are from a British manufacturer, 'Britains.' The models are the same size as normal toy soldiers (1:32 or 54mm) and I have now just about exhausted their range. I repaint all their models, and make dioramas with them, each applying to a different scene from the Wild West.

I feel positive that I could extend my range of models if I could in some way get in touch with some American manufacturers, as I am convinced that the range available in the U.S.A. must be greater that in U.K. or Europe. My problem is . . . . where do I start and who do I write to?—**C. B. White, Praestegardsvej 18, 6534 Agerskov, Denmark.**

Bootlegger Hunt

I am gathering stories of the prohibition era. If there are any of you rum-runners, bootleggers, hijackers, or boozarians left out there or anyone else with a good bootleg story, I'd like to hear from you. Would especially like some stories from Canadians across the border where a lot of the action started. There was a town named Benguane, across the Montana border that dealt in a lot of booze traffic. Thanks for any help.—**May Billing, Jordan, MT 59337.**

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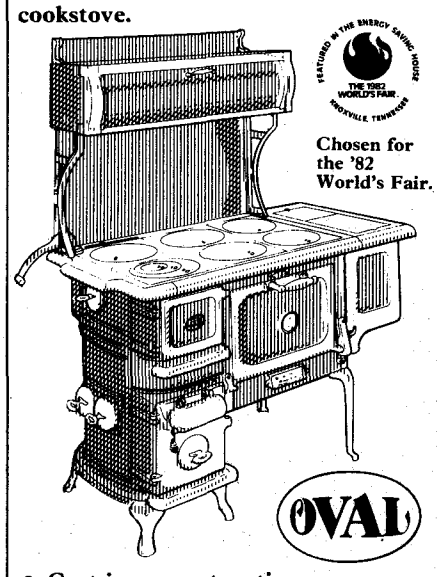

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Letters from the Kid

Have thought about writing to you for some time, think you might be interested in what I can tell you.

In 1929-1930 I took care of the ball park at Miami, Arizona. Miami, Phoenix, Mesa, Bisbee, Globe and Tucson had a class D league called the Arizona State League. I went to play ball, but wasn't good enough to make the team. They talked me into taking care of the park.

We had a skin diamond, which means no grass. They had hauled in some good dirt to make a real good infield when the team played at home. Before each game, the mining company sent a light Dodge truck down to drag the infield for me. We dragged it dry and then I watered it with a large water hose that sprinkled like rain. The truck driver and I would then sit and shoot the breeze until the diamond dried enough to drag again which left it smooth as a billiard table.

During the season we became good friends and talked of many things. He told me he was from New Mexico and lived with his uncle in Miami, who was also from New Mexico. Both their names were Jones. His uncle had lived there a long time and he came over to be with him, with lots of work there he just stayed.

One day the talk was of New Mexico and, of course, Billy the Kid.

I said to him, "You guess Pat Garrett really killed him like he was supposed to or was it a fake like I was told it was?"

He looked at me the darndest way. Then he said, "Who told you?"

I couldn't then and can't now remember who did tell me.

He said, "One of these days when I come down I'll bring you something you'd like to see and you can stop guessing about the Kid."

Before the next home game while we waited for the diamond to dry, he gave me three letters in their envelopes. He said, "Look them over and tell me what you think."

They were postmarked Mexico.

"Now look who signed them."

They were signed William H. Bonney, all three the same, with 'your friend' in front. I read one of them. It was just what any rancher would write to a friend, about the weather, the range and what the price of beef might be; how busy he was and his family was well -- just everyday news.

The nephew said his uncle had told him about the bad times, killings and whatnot in New Mexico, about Billy the Kid and his doings. His uncle was a friend to him then, and was yet. He said his uncle went down to Mexico to visit Bonney and his family.

He had married a Mexican girl and raised a family. As I remember, he had six children. His uncle said all the neighbors liked Bonney for they were very friendly to him because he was Bonney's friend.

The uncle would be very old by now, the nephew would be a bit older than I, around 80, I guess.

I still believe these letters to be just what Jones said they were. It would be something to get some of them and prove what the uncle said was so, and that the Kid did live to a ripe old age.—**Luther L. Pogue, Box 53, Joseph City, AZ 86032.**

Real to Reel

Your June 1983 issue of TRUE WEST was the best of an excellent year.

In the story "Real to Reel Outlaws" the author does not mention the main reason why Al Jennings had to give up the movies. When the Hays commission came to Hollywood after the "Fatty" Arbuckle scandal and began monitoring movies to make sure they conformed to the "moral" code of the time, the commission blackballed Jennings and made a rule that no "Criminal" shall be glorified on the screen. But Jennings' films always had a crime doesn't pay ending.

The author also fails to mention Charles Siringo, the famous cowboy-detective, who was a technical advisor to William S. Hart on many of his films.

Jennings later turned up in 1948 to "positively identify" J. Frank Dalton as the real Jesse James, even though Jesse was dead before Jennings' career began.

Jennings later said he was paid $50 for this piece of acting and being photographed with Dalton.—**Robert Valdner, 427 Hillman Ave., Staten Island, NY 10314.**

101 Ranch Cowgirl

I have read and enjoyed your magazine for many years. In one of the issues several years ago you included an article about some Neals from Tennessee. I'm sure they were some of my distant relatives.

In another issue you had a picture of a cowgirl at the 101 Ranch in Oklahoma that was unidentified. I'm not sure since I only knew her late in the 1920s, but from how I remember her, it could have been Jane Woodan or Woodall, I've forgotten her last name. She was much older then, but still dressed like the picture and rode a horse for all traveling.

She lived in Old Bliss, Oklahoma and rode into Marland about three miles every week for groceries and to have my mother sew and wash for her.

Since as a child, 1922-1928, we lived in Marland, I saw much of the work and shows put on at the 101 Ranch, the Indian fall gathers, the buffalo barbeques, the spring round-ups and the first three-ring circus (1926).

As a child I knew and spoke often to Bill Pickett who used Marland as a headquarters for mail and railroad. His kindness and soft spoken words to a kid of 7 or 8 will always be remembered.—**Lurman A. Neal, 1605 Seine Ave., Highland, CA 92346.**

Likes Those James Boys

I've been reading TRUE WEST for many years and keep my back copies. I get much pleasure out of reading them as my wife and I are from Missouri and Kentucky where many of the people we read about are from. We are both near 69 years of age.

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those days. I especially like the James boys, Jessie and Frank, and the Youngers as I am a Missourian. I came from a very small town in Missouri called Bolivar. Jessie and Frank's people were from Logan County, Kentucky.

My wife was born in Russelville, Kentucky, where Jessie robbed the bank. That same bank is still standing just as it was then. I was in the C.C.C. camp in Liberty, Missouri, when I was a very young man. That's very near Kearney, Missouri, where the James boys were born.

Please keep those good stories coming in, I read them from cover to cover.—**Albert J. Howell, 270 Collins St., Richmond, CA 94801.**

Hoecakes & Hush Puppies

My father, John W. Roberson, was born on a plantation on the Barren River at Bowling Green, Kentucky, in the early 1800s. His folks were quite well to do, they raised tobacco with slave labor.

I do not condone slave labor. I have seen times during the great Depression that started in 1929, that I would have gladly accepted their lot just to have a roof over my head and food for my labor. I am happy to say my lot changed for the better; so did the slaves'.

When a long, rainy spell or snow or extra cold weather came, the workers could not be in the fields and were confined (by the weather) to their cabins. They had large fireplaces and plenty of wood, but as they were mostly illiterate and had no radio or television, life would get pretty tedious. Like us, when idle, the body craves a snack to please the appetite and break the monotony.

There were no cooking stoves in the quarters so they had to improvise. Corn was theirs for the taking so it was mostly parched good and brown with some salt, it made a fine repast, that is for all with good strong teeth.

A lot of the oldsters were left out of this treat so they got a smooth, fist-sized rock to pound with and a flat one (or the stone hearth) to pound the corn on. It was soon transformed into good corn-meal, some of this with egg, salt and a little milk (or water) made the "Hoecake" batter.

Each worker had their personal "brush hoe." They were heavier and larger than modern hoes, not as wide but nearly as deep as it was wide. The handles were from sprouts of the right size to fit the eye in the hoe. A very durable and effective tool.

As there were no cooking utensils in the cabins these hoes were used as griddles. The inside of the blade was scoured clean and bright with an old brick and some sand in a rag. Heated over the fire then rubbed with a fat meat skin (or piece of fat-back) some batter was carefully poured on the hoe and returned to the blaze. This would be turned over on the re-greased hoe and finished browning. Man, are they good. My dad didn't miss out on many hoe-cake bakes.

Oh, yes, the "hush-puppies."

When the dogs had stood about all they could of being left out of the feast, they got right vociferous, barking and howling, so the meat was cut in fine pieces, put in the batter and cooke for them—hushing them up.—**Carl Roberson, 405 S. Rose St., Anaheim, CA 92805.**

Electric Pen?

I have found an item made on a piece of 3/8 inch plywood, 14 x 21 inches.

Behind the elk's head it is carved, the rest appears to have been done with an electric pen. The back is autographed with an electric pen, or at least it is burned in. The name is rather unclear, but it appears to be Alma Jenoe or Jense, July 30, 1909, Dundee, Ore.

I wonder if any of your readers have seen the type of work?—**Lewis Hansen, Box 325, Granum, Alberta, Canada T0L 1A0.**

(continued on page 63)

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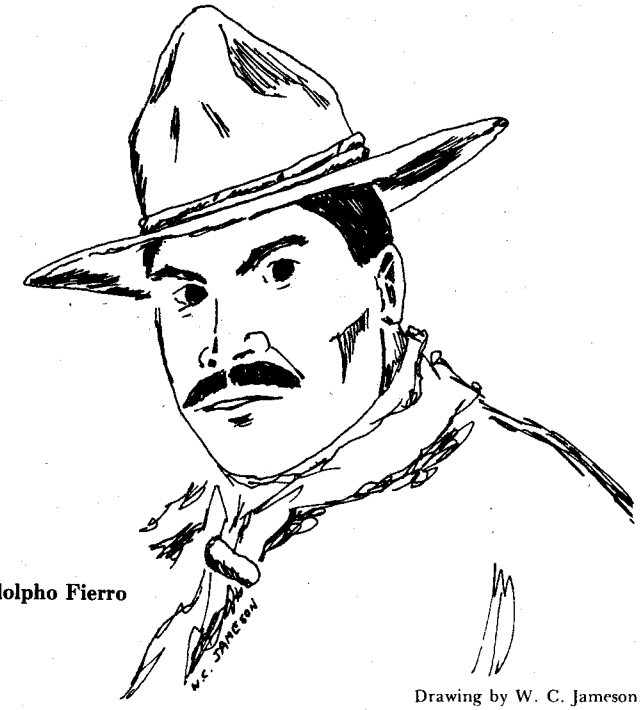
Rodolpho Fierro



Rodolpho Fierro

Drawing by W. C. Jameson.

DURING the first decade of the 20th Century, the first significant organized peasant revolt against the dictatorial rule of Mexican President Porfirio Diaz gained momentum under emerging and energetic leaders.

In southern Mexico it was Emiliano Zapata; in the West it was Venustiano Carranza and in the north it was the colorful and dashing Pancho Villa, the famed "Tiger of the North."

Villa waged bitter war against the *federales* until 1916. During this time American newspapers frequently were critical of the violence, bloodshed and mass executions that accompanied Villa's command as he stormed through the Mexican state of Chihuahua.

Following the capture of a key village, the press portrayed Villa as a bloodthirsty killer of men and boys who were disloyal to the revolution. While it was true that Villa did participate in many executions, most of the bloody massacres of prisoners of war attributed to him were actually the work of one of his high-ranking officers, Rodolpho Fierro, the man the American papers described as "The Butcher."

RODOLPHO Fierro graduated from local guerilla leader with a fierce reputation to top-level officer in Villa's command. He had been Chief of Police at Guaymas, a coastal village in the state of Sonora. He spoke English fluently and conducted himself like an educated man. Fierro joined Villa in September 1913, while the great revolutionary leader was gathering men for an offensive around the desert plains and foothills between Bermejillo and Torreon.

Thomas Urbina, one of Villa's crack cavalry commanders and good friend told Villa of a man who was serving as a combat leader in his company. He told Villa that Fierro knew trains, that he had been a brakeman on the Chihuahua-Torreon run. Urbina also told the commander that Fierro was a competent and fearless leader in combat.

"He loves blood," said Urbina.

Urbina related an incident to Villa where Fierro had stopped a train carrying nearly 100 traitors to the revolution. He ordered the passengers off and lined them in front of the cars. he then informed them he was going to kill them and walked down the line firing into the bodies of men, women, and children. He paused only long enough to have an aide reload his weapons and to tell his escort to fire upon any who fled.

Villa told Urbina he wanted to meet a man such as this and had Fierro invited to dine with him that evening. Almost instantly the two Mexicans developed a strong liking for one another.

Villa had Fierro released immediately from Urbina's command and transferred to his own. The two became almost inseparable. Fierro was given command of a mounted brigade and frequently served as Villa's bodyguard.

FIERRO was a cruel, brutish man. His nickname "The Butcher" resulted from his love for executing prisoners. Often Fierro personally executed prisoners before Villa arrived on the scene. On more than one occasion Fierro had to be physically restrained by Villa from executing captured federalist officers. Fierro claimed the solution to any problem was the gun.

Fierro had small, black, beady eyes reflecting the cruelty within. He smiled often, but even the smile bespoke savagery. He was almost as tall as the 5-foot, 10-inch Villa and was powerfully built. He had a thick shock of hair that he kept well-trimmed in military style and he sported a carefully groomed moustache.

While guerilla leaders such as Villa and Urbina appreciated Fierro for his fighting skills, most feared and hated him. Observers of Villa's campaigns said Fierro killed men "because he like to watch death come into their eyes."

There was no hint of kindness or sentimentality in Fierro. It was said that when they were available, Fierro would kill a prisoner each morning before sitting down to a huge meal.

He drank heavily but was never seen intoxicated. He and Villa would argue constantly and followers often wondered why Villa put up with him. Villa would scold and threaten Fierro but he always kept him nearby. Fierro remained loyal to the revolution.

ONE incident during the battles for the cities of Chihuahua and Juarez underscores the unusual relationship between Villa and Fierro. Villa's army had captured an ammunition train head-

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BLOODY BUTCHER FOR PANCHO VILLA

By WILLIAM CARL JAMESON

ed for Ciudad Chihuahua to reinforce the command there.

At an isolated train station along the way, Villa forced the telegrapher to wire General Castro, who was defending Juarez, stating, "Villa in full retreat to the south of Chihuahua. Am sending train back with reinforcements of 800 men with ammunition and supplies." He signed the message as being sent from General Mercado, who was defending Chihuahua City.

Villa then had the wire cut and as he was leaving the station to rejoin Urbina and the troops, he saw Fierro shove a pistol into the ribs of the terrified telegrapher.

"Leave him alone," Villa said. "He looks like a nice boy. We'll take him with us and turn him loose when this is all over."

"It's easier just to shoot him," said Fierro.

Villa glared at Fierro stonily and said, "And it's easier to shoot you than to argue with you." As he spoke, Villa drew his revolver. "Make up your mind and fast," said the leader.

With a grin and a shrug of his shoulders, Fierro holstered his pistol and obediently followed his commander.

UTILIZING Fierro's experience with trains, Villa gave him the job of moving the troops via the railroad. Fierro took this postion with relish and proved to be as good at it as he was a cavalry officer.

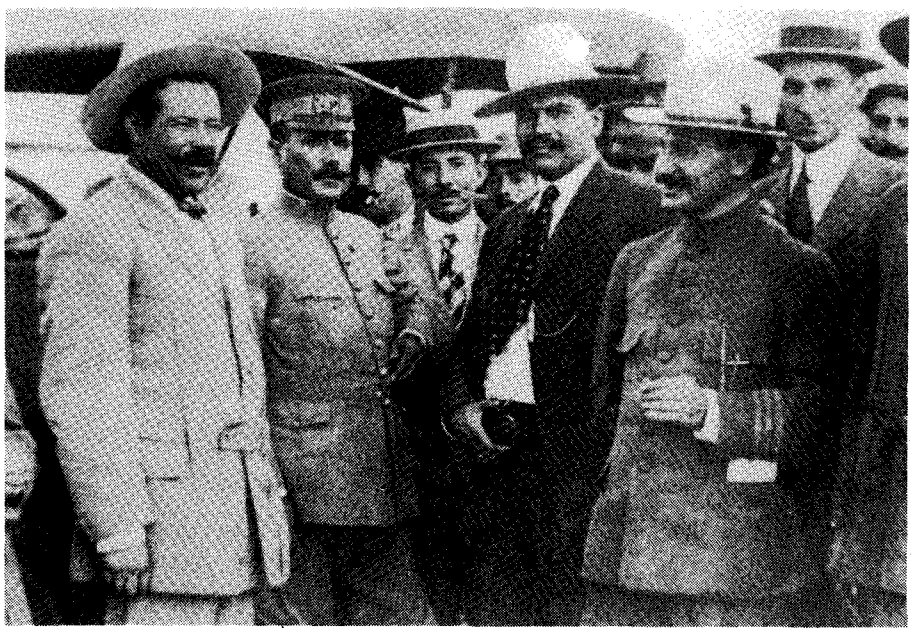
Prior to the Battle of Tierra Blanca, General Mercado's entire force vacated Chihuahua City and headed north to Juarez, where Villa met them.

Proceeding south with his 800 men, Villa planned to rendezvous with his crack Division del Norte of 4,200 troops and fight the northbound federalist contingent where Mercado's generals least expected to meet him.

Villa dispatched Fierro with a detachment of soldiers, dynamiters and railroaders to circle behind Mercado's trains and cut the tracks, thus discouraging retreat.

Surprised by the rebel army waiting for them, the federalists were forced to strike only half-prepared. Villa promptly and effectively counter-attacked and for three days the battle raged. Mercado's 5,000 regulars were soon reinforced by a column of 2,000 Juarez survivors but still proved inferior to Villa's 5,000 men. The federalists attempted to withdraw to Chihuahua when The Butcher struck.

Concentrating on the closest train, Fierro had the rails blocked and ordered an attack, surprising the troop escort. He ordered the passengers unloaded and executed.



Courtesy Aultman Collection, El Paso Public Library

Rodolpho Fierro is fourth from left, with watch chain in coat. Pancho Villa is at left.

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He uncoupled the engine and loaded the front-end cowcatcher with dynamite studded with high-impact explosive caps. Grinning, Fierro got into the cab of the engine, opened the throttle, and leaped from the rolling bomb yelling, "Now we are going to have some fun, amigos."

The engine raced northward toward the retreating trains which were stalled by Villa's attack. As the cowcatcher collided with the last caboose, the earth was shaken by a thunderous explosion. Thus ended Mercado's hopes for escape.

An enormous black ball of smoke rose from the scene. The rear troop train lay scattered in pieces over half a mile and a long stretch of track had been twisted into blackened junk.

The *federales* were in wild retreat. Unable to move forward or backward, the trains, loaded with men and war materials, could only sit on the tracks awaiting Villa. The Butcher had done his job well.

THE event which brought Fierro to the attention of the American press involved a British rancher named William Benton, who arrived one day at Villa's headquarters in Juarez to protest Villa's tax of 1,000 head of his cattle. Benton was a tough, hardbitten man who hated Mexicans even though he was married to one. He was an important land holder and raised prize cattle.

Bursting into Villa's office, he called the revolution leader several names while pounding on the desk. Villa arrested Benton and while he was being escorted from the room, the Englishman wheeled from his guard and pulled a gun, waving it threateningly at the Mexican general. Fierro, who was seated in a corner of the room, calmly pulled out his revolver and shot Benton through the head, killing him instantly.

In a short time American newsmen heard of the incident, and their papers soon carried reports of the murder.

FOLLOWING the Battle of Zacatecas on June 23, 1914, Fierro received a leg wound. W.D. Lansford, noted Villa biographer, recorded how Fierro unable to get around became bored. His boredom took him to the stockade to look over the 300 prisoners incarcerated there.

Fierro ordered the guards to assemble the prisoners in the courtyard and he told them, "I have a game you might enjoy playing, amigos."

Pointing to a stone mortar wall some 100 yards away, he said, "You see that wall? Well, I am going to stand right here and watch you run for it, one by one. If you make it to the wall and clear it before I pick you off with my pistol, you are a free man. If not *pues, asi es la vida* (well, that's life)!"

Courtesy Aultman Collection, El Paso Public Library

Rodolpho Fierro

Several prisoners balked at making themselves target practice for Fierro. The Butcher instructed the guards to bayonet the first man who refused to run. An orderly spread a blanket for him to sit on and deposited 300 rounds of ammunition. The orderly loaded his guns for him as they were emptied.

With characteristic cruelty, Fierro allowed the first prisoner to get almost to the wall before killing him. He did the same for the second, the third and so on. Firing with either hand, he tracked each man's deperate run with the point of the barrel and dropped him when he was ready. By noon he was still feeling fresh and ordered a lunch brought to him. He ate while standing and continued with his grisly game.

It was close to evening when the last prisoner broke for the gate, frantically dodging and weaving. Fierro was tired by now, his eyes blurred and he was having a hard time focusing on the target.

The last man had just made it to the wall and was nearly over it when Fierro leveled his revolver. The gun roared and the man fell back into the prison compound.

As the victim was convulsing on the ground, one of the guards asked Fierro if he wanted him to go check to see if the prisoner was dead. Fierro replied sharply, "When I shoot a man, he is dead."

Fierro then lay down his guns, reclined on the blanket and fell asleep. An orderly covered him with another blanket and The Butcher slept peacefully at the scene of carnage all night.

IN THE ensuing months of the war, Thomas Urbina embezzled millions of pesos from the Villa treasury, thus jeopardizing the war effort by making money unavailable for supplies.

Eventually, seeing that the Villa forces were getting weaker and were in danger of being eliminated altogether, he deserted to a ranch he had procured during one of his former raids.

When this treachery was discovered, Fierro argued with Villa that Urbina must be brought in and executed. Villa argued that it could not be done, that he and Urbina had been friends too long and had saved each others lives numerous times. Fierro persisted and finally Villa agreed: Urbina must be killed as an example to the other men.

Some scholars maintain that even though Fierro was a protege of Urbina, he always was jealous of him because of his closeness with Villa. In any case, Villa, Fierro, and a contingent of troops appeared at Urbina's rancho one afternoon.

Urbina, recuperating from a drunken party the night before, opened fire on the troops as they approached and in the exchange of gunfire he was wounded and surrendered. Villa drew a pistol and walked into the ranch house.

A while later Villa came back and told Fierro that he was unable to kill Urbina. Fierro reminded Villa that he had given his word and the leader relented, telling Fierro to do the job for him.

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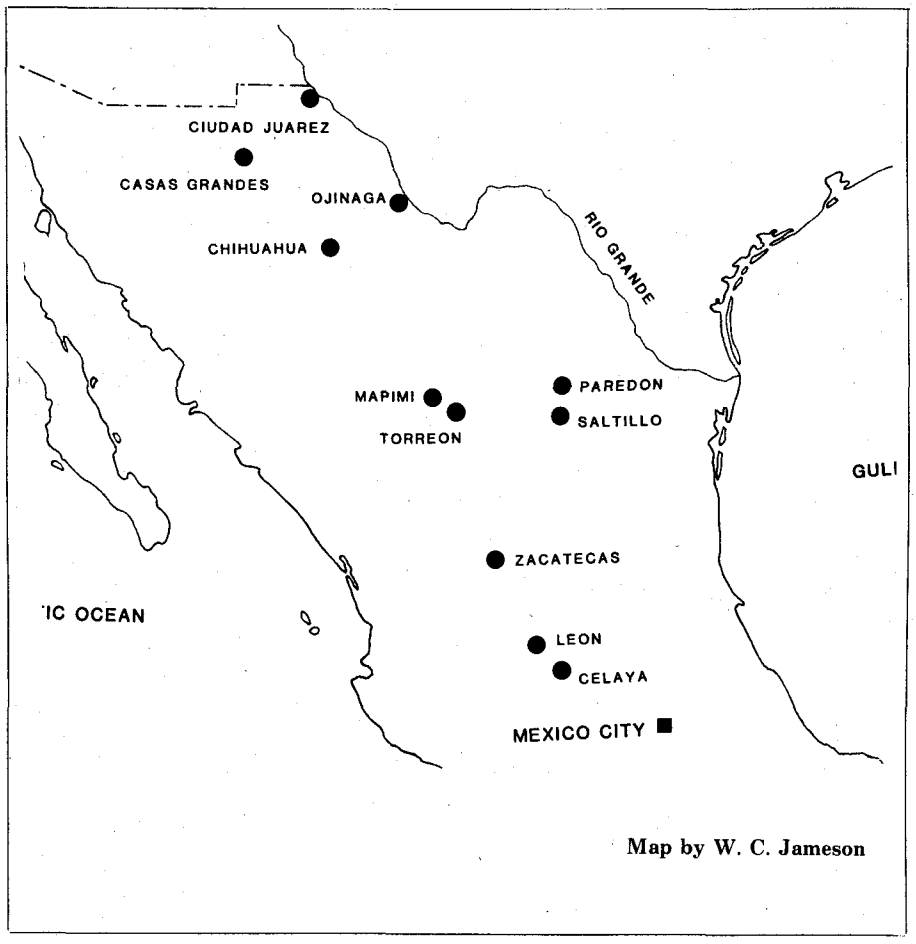

Map by W. C. Jameson

"But remember," Villa told Fierro, "Don't let him suffer."

As Villa rode away, Fierro went into the house and told Urbina he was going to take him to the hospital in Ciudad Chihuahua to have his wound dressed and he loaded the grateful man into a buggy.

Urbina yelled to the retreating Villa, "I knew it, Pancho, I knew you would help me. We are compadres, aren't we? You are the best friend I ever had. Gracias, amigo."

Villa continued to ride away, tears in his eyes.

Three miles from the ranch house the dirt road came to a narrow bridge and it was here that Fierro ordered the escort to dismount. He told Urbina to get out of the buggy and stand next to a nearby tree.

"Why should I do that?" asked Urbina, already guessing the truth. "I enlisted you, Rodolpho, you remember?" Urbina began to cry. "I made you a Captain. We were friends.

"I am not interested in old times, amigo," replied Fierro curtly. "To me you are nothing more than a traitor to Villa and the cause. You cost us the Battle of Celaya and because of that we almost lost everything the revolution was trying to attain for our people."

Fierro then ordered Urbina to approach him, telling him that the ten steps it would take to reach him would give him an extra ten seconds of life. But as Urbina took the first step, Fierro ordered the escort to fire. Urbina fell to the ground, rolling and kicking. Fierro walked over to him and placed two bullets into his brain. He then rode back to Villa and informed him Urbina's debt had been paid.

DURING the winter of 1916, Villa planned a journey to Agua Prieta from Casas Grandes to attack General Plutarco Elias Calles, a leader of the Carranza forces. Agua Prieta was considered a key border town.

Villa left the bulk of his army to winter at Casas Grandes and started across the snow-covered Sierra Madres with a small vanguard he felt would be sufficient to take and hold Agua Prieta. The snow was unusually deep for this time of year and rain fell in torrents adding to the swollen rivers. Such conditions slowed the march of the command, frustrating Villa and Fierro.

Approaching one roaring stream, Fierro spurred his mount into the raging water. The current was stronger than he anticipated and he and his horse were carried downstream. As usual, Fierro was laden with several bands of ammunition, two large pistols in a heavy leather belt, great spurs on his knee-high boots and a money belt heavy with some of the gold retrieved from Urbina.

This load proved fatal. While his men watched, Fierro was pulled under and drowned. Several of the riders recalled later that Fierro went to his death fighting and cursing all the way, just as he acted in life.

Several hundred yards downstream Villa found Fierro's mangled body lodged on a sandbar. He had him carried to a high point overlooking the river and buried him with military honors.

The Butcher would kill no more.

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A new book by Madoline C. Dixon of Payson, Utah, is off the press. Titled "These Were the Utes," the 200-page volume covers the Ute Indians of Central Utah. Biographical studies of the major Ute chiefs, accounts of Indian wars and various topics appear in the 18 chapters of the book.
Mrs. Dixon is the author of "Petetneet Town," a history of Payson," which has proved highly popular to local and former residents of Payson. A few copies of "Petetneet Town" are still available.
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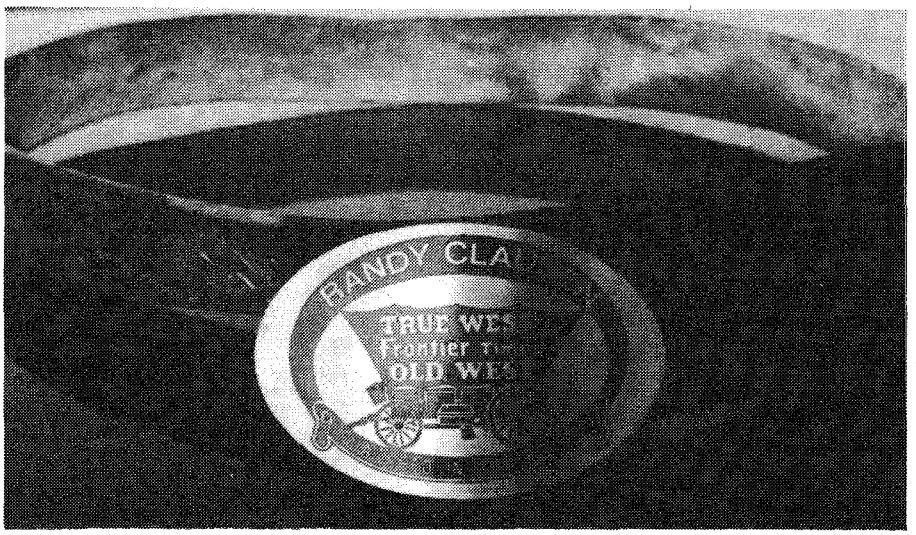

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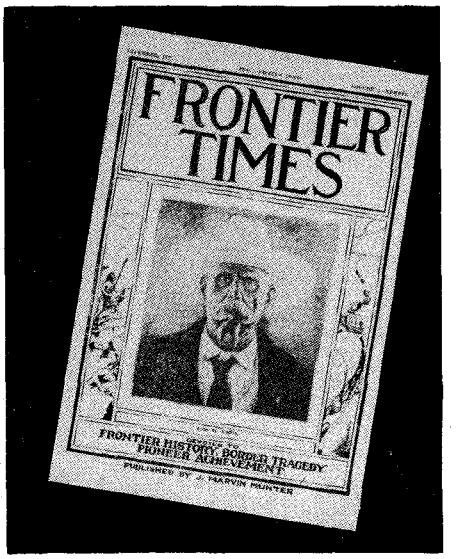

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The Answer Man

Several readers each month ask how they may obtain books. Two this month asked about *Dear Old Kit, the Historical Kit Carson,* by Harvey Carter, published by the University of Oklahoma Press.

This book is out of print and the best way for anyone to get this, or any such book, is to order from the used book dealers who advertise in TRUE WEST.

Custer Weapons. Why were General Custer's troops at the Little Big Horn armed with only single-shot Springfield carbines equipped with faulty extractors when much better repeating weapons had been in use for years? Such as Spencers, Henrys, Winchesters, etc.?

This is a question from Dale Cromwell, Rt. 1, Box 382, Lake Isabella, CA 93240.

It is interesting to note, by way of reply, that General Ranald S. Mackenzie had once requested Winchesters but the U.S. Army answered him that the Springfield had a range of 100 yards more and also had greater penetrating power. The Springfield had a range of at least 600 yards. Apparently although the Winchester had advantages, such as not overheating when fired rapidly, authorities preferred the Springfield's longer range and greater penetrating power.

Probably the only thing which would have saved Custer would have been the Gatling gun. This would have quickly equalized the numbers at Little Big Horn.

Jeff Milton's Arm. What happened to lawman Jeff Milton's left arm which he was not able to use in a gun fight? This from Anthony Pomaro, 68 Neptune Place, Colonia, NJ 07067.

On the evening of Feb. 15, 1900, five men attempted to rob a train on which Milton was a guard. The men were "Three-fingered Jack" Dunlap, George and Lewis Owens, "Bravo Juan" Yoes and Bob Brown.

They were unsuccessful since Milton fired back when they began the robbery. But Milton was shot in the left arm between his elbow and shoulder. Dunlap and Yoes were wounded. Milton was hospitalized first in Tucson under the care of Dr. H.W. Fenner.

Complications set in and the arm was to be amputated. Milton didn't want to lose his arm so he simply put his six-gun in his belt and walked out. He then received medical treatment from Tombstone's famous Dr. George Goodfellow. He didn't lose the arm but it wasn't of much use after that.

Sons of Sitting Bull. Harry J. Owens, Box 486, Red Lodge, MT 59068, asked if Sitting Bull had any sons and where he might find out more about them.

Sitting Bull had nine wives and many children, sons and daughters. His most famous son was Crow Foot who was 17 when Sitting Bull was killed at the Standing Rock Reservation (Grand River Settlement) on Dec. 15, 1890.

In August 1876, a young son was killed also at the Standing Rock Reservation when a mule kicked him in the head. His name is not recorded.

The one son who reached maturity was an adopted son, Little Assiniboin. He was found as a youngster under a bed in Sitting Bull's house following Sitting Bull's death. He was called Stays Back and later was named after Sitting Bull's father, Jumping Bull. He also was known as Ota Ktepi, Killed Plenty and Killed Often.

Outlaw Cave. Tom McCarty and his brother Bill had brief but spectacular outlaw careers in western Colorado and eastern Utah in the late 1880s and the McCarty gang directly preceeded Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch.

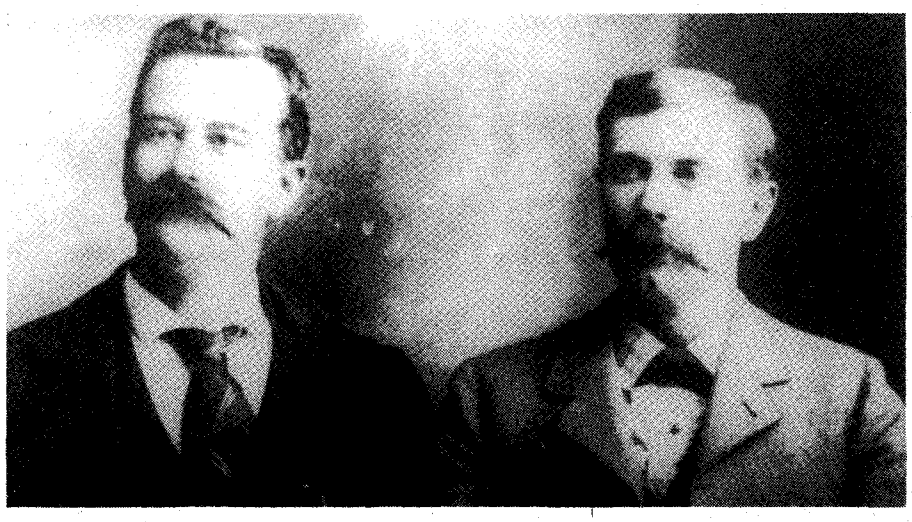
Walt Thayer, Box 2175, Wenatchee, WA 98801, writes of his research on Tom McCarty and notes that he has never been able to locate the outlaw's grave.

No one can say for sure where McCarty was buried - or no one has thus far. Members of his family claimed he disappeared and his resting place in unknown. Some reports indicate that he was killed near Greenriver, Utah. Matt Warner, one of McCarty's outlaw cohorts who later turned lawman, said he believed McCarty was killed in Montana's Bitterroot Valley.

There are also reports that McCarty went to Skagway, Alaska, during the gold rush. Some say he was killed or died in Skagway but no record has been located to verify this. Others say he was living in the Enterprise, Oregon, area as late as 1912.

Maybe someone knows the answer to this question.

—Chuck Parsons



Jeff Milton, left, with friend, George Scarborough, probably taken in El Paso, Texas, 1894-1900.

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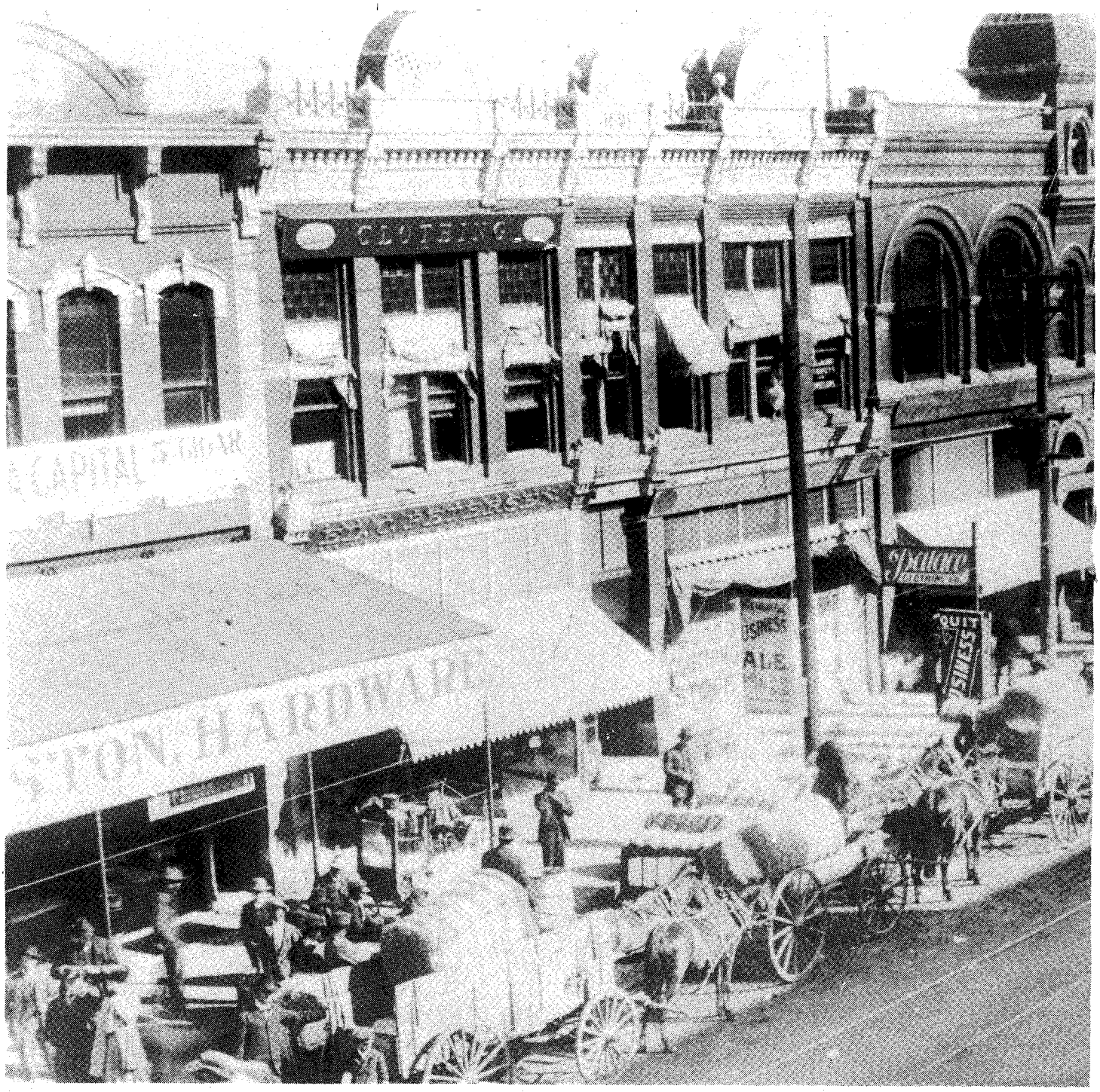

Guthrie – Grand Old

AS you drive today down Guthrie, Oklahoma's paved streets, you are immediately struck by the beautiful, stately architecture of a bygone era, the Victorian Era.

Guthrie is better than a ghost town because here people still live and work and play. It is better than a re-created town because what you see in Guthrie is real - the buildings are 80 and more years old. And Guthrie is so impressive because a majority of its downtown Victorian buildings have somehow been bypassed by the wrecking ball and stand in regal elegance every bit as beautiful as they were so many, many years ago.

For Guthrie, which once stood on the brink of national prominence and was suddenly and ruthlessly torn from that brink, was caught in a most unusual time warp. It is as if the past 70 years did not exist and Guthrie leaped from 1900 to 1984 with little intervening time.

So Guthrie, located on Interstate 35 which bisects Oklahoma going north and south, may really have been the ultimate victor in its bitter struggle with Oklahoma City, its colossus neighbor to the south. But it will never forget . . .

OF course Guthrie was not always a

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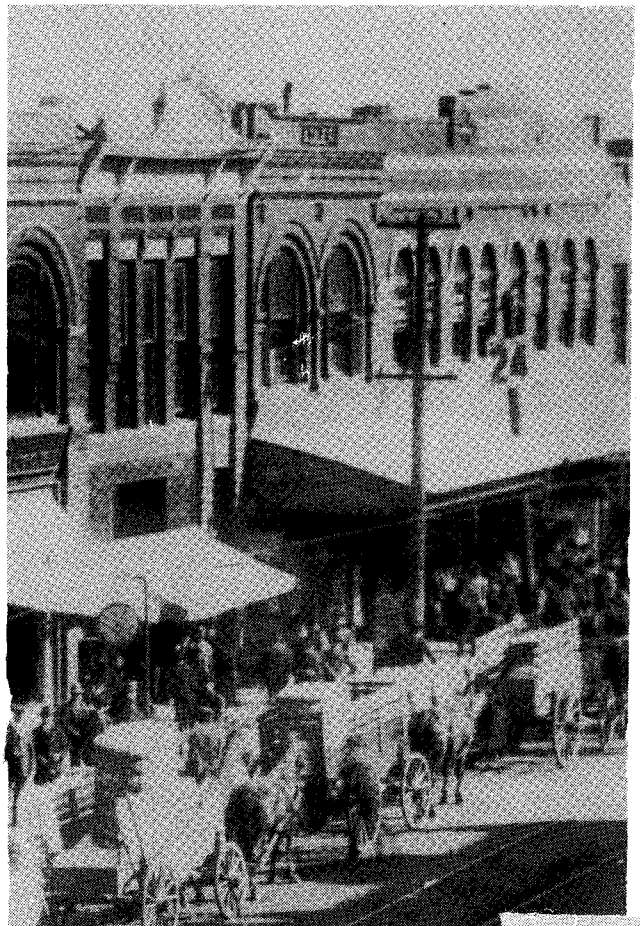

The city that time forgot is becoming a major tourist attraction

By LLOYD LENTZ III

Photos from Lloyd Lentz III Collection

Shortly after the turn of the century, Guthrie was replete with handsome new structures, as seen at left. Photo was taken about 1905. As scene below of present Guthrie shows, most of the grand old buildings survive and are being restored.

Lady of Oklahoma

resplendent collage of Victorian architecture. At one time it was nothing but rolling grasslands and cottonwoods along the streams. It was not even inhabited by Indians. That was Before the Run and hardly anyone in Oklahoma talks about anything Before the Run. That is when life began; when Oklahoma began - and when Guthrie began.

The run was truly a scene which later added to the phrase "wild west."

"A scene without parallel in Frontier history" read the bold headlines of the Weekly Republican Traveler from Arkansas City, Kansas, of April 28, 1889. The report was about Guthrie and the first opening of Oklahoma to homesteaders.

The unassigned lands, also called "Oklahoma Country," consisted of approximately 2 million uninhabited acres in the center of Indian Territory. Much controversy had arisen as to the use of the land and beginning about 1880, numerous groups of "Boomers" made attempts to settle in Oklahoma but were forceably removed by the U.S. Army.

Public sentiment increased and pressure was brought on Congress and the President by would-be settlers, the railroads and others to open the area to settlement.

In the last hours of Congress in March

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Probably the best photo in the Lentz collection. Don't these lawyers look like they could take your last dime? This was taken on April 22, 1889, in Guthrie, the day of the run. Swarms of lawyers descended on Guthrie to avail themselves for the many property disputes that were expected.

property had already been claimed," reported one observer.

BY the time this first crowd from the train reached the top of the slope near the land office, the men who had been running parallel lines for streets and driving in stakes for town lots were well on their way along the level strip of land east of the land office. The crowd then caught the moving line of streets and lots and rushed it eastward at a tremendous rate.

By federal law each townsite in the new land was limited to one half section. The Guthrie townsite quickly overflowed this limit.

There was nothing that could be done, however, as every lot was "protected by rifles and revolvers," and if shooting began, there was no telling where it would stop. The only recourse left was to buy out any lot holders who wanted to sell, or to gamble by staking a lot outside of the original townsite limit. Both courses were adopted. Many people traded or sold city lots, while others drove stakes outside the town line.

Six trains from Arkansas City swelled the crowd by several thousand. By this time the lot seekers reached the eastern horizon. As the seventh and eighth trains came in that afternoon, the city expanded further.

On the east, the streets and town lots had been extended fully two miles; on the north a mile and a half and on the south nearly a mile. Many people, after seeing the original townsite of Guthrie crowded with new arrivals, promptly forded the Cottonwood Creek west of the depot and charged the hill on the west horizon.

The land office occupied the most conspicuous postion in the townsite and could be seen for several miles in all directions. It was shortly besieged by an eager and determined crowd of men waiting to file homestead claims.

As the afternoon wore on the crowd grew larger until, at closing time, it reached an irregular line down the slope west toward the railway station.

"It is not yet finished, yet it is doing something more than a land office business," reported witnesses. Near the land office to the south in a wall tent was the newly established U.S. Post Office. Close by was the tent headquarters of the U.S. marshal.

Fred Wenner, correspondent for the New York Herald, Chicago Times and the St. Louis Globe Democrat, who made the run to Guthrie wrote:

"Every prospective lot had from two to a half dozen claimants with the government reserves of an acre about the land office and every street and alley covered solidly with tents, flags, stakes or men or women just holding down a location by sitting or standing on it. Everybody was tired and hungry and thirsty -- it had been a hot afternoon, and dusty."

Confusion reigned supreme as the contestants vied for choice town lots. Even the streets were staked out and claimed by homeseekers. Guthrie enjoyed "the distinction of being absolutely without streets. There are several open spaces which resemble streets, but each is blocked at its end by shanties, and tent stakes without number make walking extremely dangerous," reported the New York Times of April 29.

Guthrie swelled in one day to an estimated 10,000 to 12,000 inhabitants. It was one of the fastest "boomtowns" in American history.

By nightfall the Guthrie townsite resembled the bivouac of a vast army with the sparse light from campfires and

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Top photo shows the State Capital Publishing Museum, restored in 1980—the first preservation project in downtown Guthrie. The State Capital Co. was founded in 1889. Below that is the restored Victor building. Completed in 1893, it is a premier example of the current preservation underway in Guthrie.

of 1889, a rider was attached to the Indian Appropriations Bill to open the district to settlement. After years of work the Boomers were successful.

President Benjamin Harrison, during his third week of office, issued a proclamation setting the opening date at noon, Monday, April 22, 1889. All eligible persons would be allowed to legally enter the district, stake a claim and file at one of the two U.S. Land Offices which were hastily erected at Guthrie and Kingfisher. Both locations were hardly more than tiny encampments.

AS news of the planned opening spread, aspirants from across the United States made preparations. The major staging areas were in southern Kansas, particularly Arkansas City where the single rail line of the Southern Kansas Railroad ran south through Indian Territory and into Texas.

Several days before the run the borders of Indian Territory were opened by guarding soldiers and eager boomers were allowed to gather on the boundary of the Oklahoma district.

The opening made national news. The New York Times of April 16 reported: "Wellington, Kan. April 15. White covered wagons bound for Oklahoma have been passing through all day long. Pawnee Bill was here this morning and stated that the soldiers have all been withdrawn from the state line and now are on the Oklahoma line."

On Monday, April 22, 1889, people were lined up by the thousands along the borders: They came from all backgrounds, businessmen, cowboys, farmers, journalists, speculators and adventurers. They waited side by side for the noon signal.

Many would make the great dash by horseback; others by wagon, carriage, prairie schooner and many on foot. There were even a few bicycles.

Adding to this tempestuous group were the trains waiting to push into the district simultaneously from the north and south. Every coach was packed with passengers who crowded the aisles, seats and windows. Others clung desperately to the sides and tops of the cars.

At high noon the soldiers announced the start with bugle calls and rifle fire: The invasion was on. The wild Boomers charged headlong into the district by the thousands. The furious charge was led by the swiftest horses which soon disappeared from sight. The slower wagons and carriages followed as the immense throng spread out for miles like a great army. There were no roads or bridges and only a few marked crossings at streams that were often treacherous with mud or quicksand.

"The scramble for the land began promptly at 12 o'clock and for an hour crowds streamed into Oklahoma over all four borders. All were eager; all were determined," reported the New York Times on April 23.

Shortly after noon the first train from the south steamed into the Guthrie Depot followed a few minutes after 1 p.m. by the first train from the north.

Hardly had the trains slowed at the station when people leaped from car windows, slid from the roofs of the coaches and poured out of the doors. The charge drove eastward from the depot, up the slope toward the townsite and the U.S. Land Office. In a minute the slope leading from the station was covered with men rushing headlong for coveted town lots.

The real surprise came as these first trains pulled into the Guthrie Depot. It was clear that many people were already there. In fact, the town was already "well-populated." Many of the streets and city lots had already been laid out, staked off and claimed in open defiance of the law by enterprising men, after referred to by the derogatory title of "Sooners."

A "considerable portion of the best

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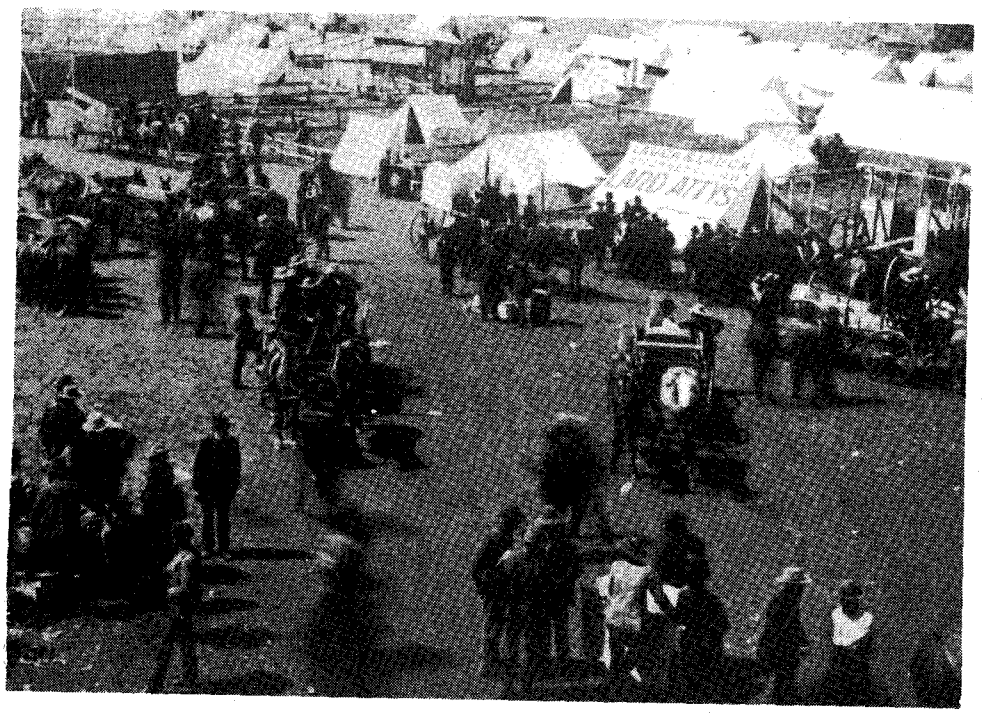
This man wasn't really hanged—this photo was staged as an indication of what law-abiding citizens thought of "sooners" and "claim jumpers." Photo taken April-May 1889. Below, photo taken on April 27, 1889, shows Guthrie was one of the fastest boomtowns in frontier history. At this date, five days after the Run, frame buildings are already going up.



lanterns dotting the landscape.

TO minimize confusion and preserve peace, it was decided to organize a provisional city government at once. The next day a general assembly was held southeast of the land office and Charles W. Constantine, past mayor of Springfield, Ohio, was chosen chairman. The first order of business was selection of a committee composed of one member from each state or territory represented at the meeting.

Wenner described the meeting:

"On recommendation of the committee the crowd voted unanimously to repudiate the townsite plans prepared and officers elected by the Ft. Smith, Arkansas, and Winfield, Kansas, sooners who had entered the country in advance of the opening day, and denounced in no uncertain terms the action of scores of Deputy U.S. marshals, revenue collectors, distillery gaugers, and other federal employees who had entered on the guise of official business, attempting to steal from honest settlers the best part of townsites and many of the most valuable homesteads.

Declaring themselves citizens assembled to organize the City of Guthrie and elect officers, therefore, nominations for mayor were called for."

There were half a dozen candidates at first, but soon all but two were eliminated; the balloting continued for two days with no satisfactory result. Several times during the second day the proceedings became so agitated that troops from Camp Guthrie were called to maintain order.

During the two days of balloting the officials could not agree on the count. The rival candidates, Robert W. Hill and Volney Hoggatt, were evenly matched.

"In fact, it was such an even matter that serious trouble was apprehended. Both men were asked to withdraw, but the request only met with a prompt refusal and the electioneering waxed fast and furious. Finally, the more conservative elements of both parties took matters in hand and selected a committee of three from each faction. These six men agreed upon a seventh man and after deliberating two hours they elected Colonel Dyer as the first executive of the youngest city on earth," reported the New York Times on April 28.

Daniel B. Dyer of St. Louis, Missouri, a former Indian Agent in the Territory, described as the "dark horse" of "about fifty" became the first mayor. Later in the day the members of the city council were chosen. The first official meeting was held in the tent city hall near the

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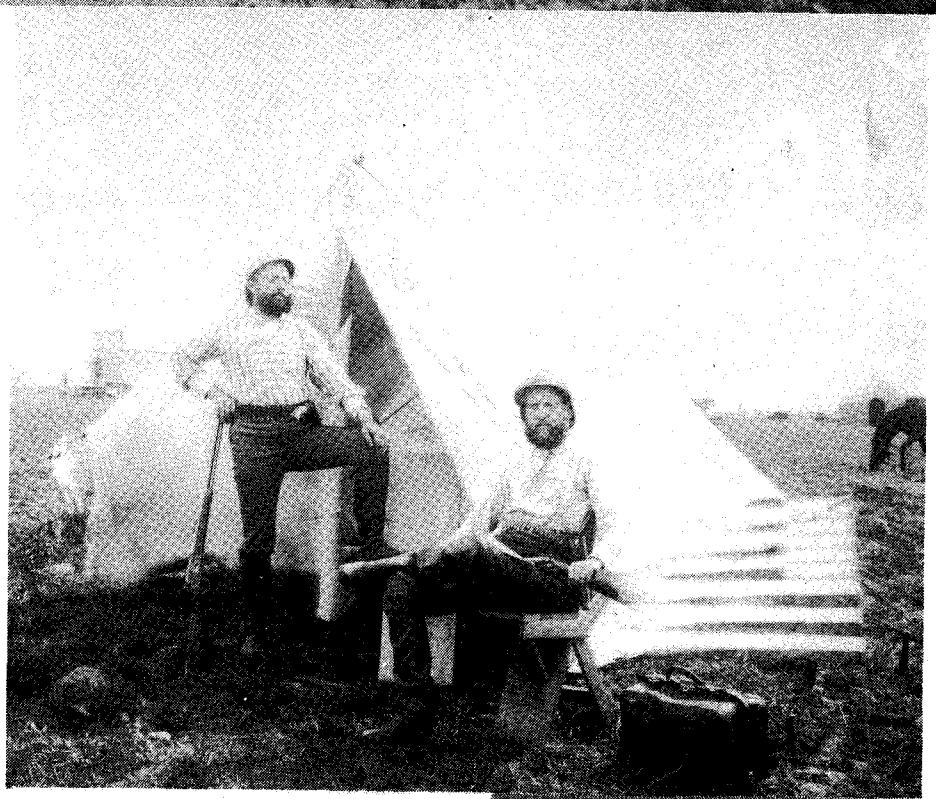

Above, a rare photo of the actual run of April 22, 1889. It shows first Boomers charging up east hill from depot to claim first town lots. To right, two men appear determined to keep their lot. Frank Hilton Greer, below, founded State Capital newspaper in 1889; it was the first paper in Oklahoma. Also below, U.S. Land Office, taken May 27, 1889—it was one of two buildings in Guthrie at the time of the Run.

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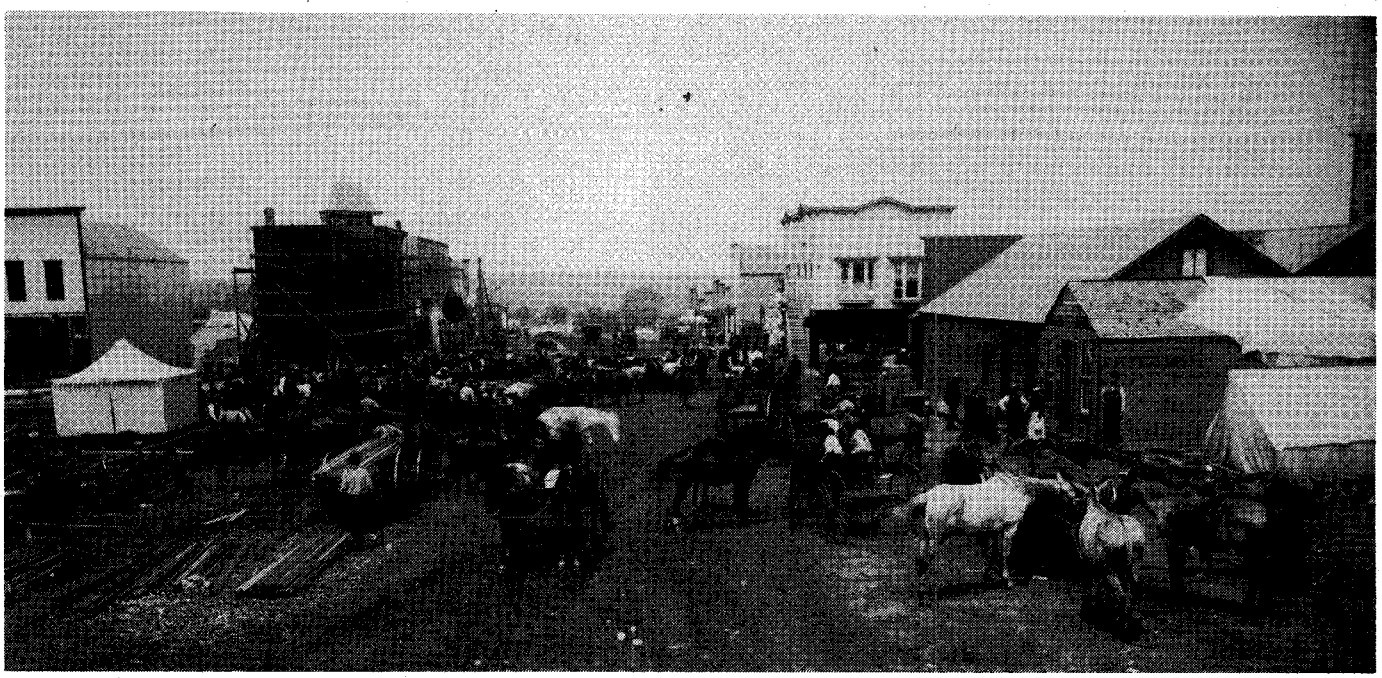

This is Guthrie in May-June 1889 looking west on Harrison Street toward rail tracks.

land office.

THIS first City of Guthrie was organized not to exceed the legal limit of 320 acres. Shortly after, the other three adjoining townsites of Capital Hill, East Guthrie and West Guthrie organized separate town governments with their own elected officials and ordinances.

With the completion of town surveys, clearing of streets and the work of Arbitration Boards to settle claim disputes, the citizens of Guthrie slowly began to enjoy some order. Settlers were making improvements to their claims and soon, by the end of May, the first wooden frame buildings began to replace the tents as the most common form of shelter. On July 29, 1890, the four townsites were consolidated into the single city of Guthrie.

In a few short months Guthrie could boast of having some of the advantages provided by other larger and longer established cities. In August an official city directory was published and listed among other things: Six banks, 16 barbers, 16 blacksmiths and wagon makers, 17 carpenters and builders, two cigar manufacturers, seven hardware companies, 15 hotels, 81 lawyers, 19 druggists, 22 lumber dealers, five photographers, 39 physicians, 40 restaurants, nine churches, five newspapers, one telegraph office and one electric light plant.

On May 2, 1890, Congress passed the Organic Act which established the Territory of Oklahoma composed of the western half of Indian Territory. The Act named Guthrie as the Territorial Capitol.

The population of Guthrie stabilized at approximately 5,300 by 1890 according to the U.S. Census. The commercial boom began in the late 1890s and peaked by 1905. Many of the modest frame structures of the earliest period were replaced with larger and more substantial masonry structures. They reflected the architectural grandeur of the time and faith in the former boomtown's future. By 1900, the population numbered 10,000.

FOR several years there was increasing agitation for statehood. In 1907 it came when Oklahoma and Indian territories were united into the present state of Oklahoma. Guthrie benefited from its past success and became the state capitol. It was a temporary success as the legislation called for a statewide election in 1913, in which the

Capital City Band of Guthrie, pictured below in 1905, played John Philip Sousa marches and more. Buildings in background are now being restored.

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citizens would decide the permanent capital location.

During this time of fierce political rivalry the major threat to Guthrie's success was its larger neighbor to the south, Oklahoma City. A unique set of circumstances developed that eventually caused the removal of the capitol to Oklahoma City.

The principal factors were political and economic. The first state governor, Charles Haskell, was of fierce Democratic persuasion while Guthrie remained loyal to the Republican party. Growing attacks on the governor by the strongly Republican State Capital newspaper from Guthrie, the first paper published in Oklahoma, promoted increasingly bitter feelings.

In retrospect all but one of the nine territorial governors had been Republican. Since statehood the power had shifted in favor of the Democrats. In addition the population of Oklahoma City had risen to more than 64,000 while Guthrie remained just slightly more than 11,000.

Weary of constant attacks and seeking further political gain, Haskell called the special election for June 10, 1910, a full three years ahead of schedule. Guthrie received 25,819 votes and Oklahoma City 84,575 votes.

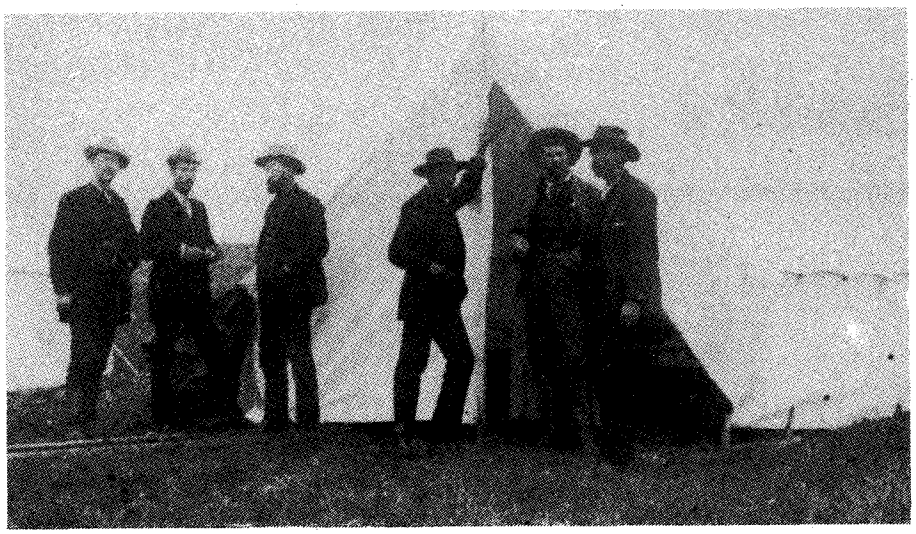
Within a few hours of the vote, Haskell declared Oklahoma City the victor and removed his office from Guthrie.

Both the election and removal were challenged. After long and heated battles, the State Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court upheld the relocation.

The long and bitter struggle was ended but not forgotten. Almost overnight Guthrie began a long and uneventful stagnation that has lasted almost until the present.

IT IS fortunate irony that in the "capitol fight" were the seeds for the economic and cultural rebirth of the city. The lack of development capital had prevented the dramatic change of the older parts of the downtown area. New development in downtown virtually ceased. This lack of "progress" left most of the original territorial period structures intact.

As a result the city is now recognized as one of the finest collections of territorial period architecture available anywhere. The old district of town was given special recognition in 1973 when it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of Interior.



Courtesy National Archives

U.S. marshals camp, taken April 1889, at Guthrie. They awaited expected trouble.

Many of the structures have been restored to their original grandeur and more are under renovation. Most of the impetus for the current historic preservation comes from a strong city preservation ordinance enacted in 1978, an aggressive Logan County Historical Society and a very supportive Guthrie Daily Leader, the oldest newspaper in Oklahoma.

With two major museums, shopping, fine dining and much history to see, Guthrie is currently enjoying a renaissance unequaled in its history. There has not been as much action in Guthrie since the early Boomers and Sooners vied for the first town lots.

When Visiting Guthrie...

Even the most particular visitor will be pleased with the charm and historic atmosphere of the old Capital City of Guthrie. During the last five years several groups, historians and businesses have worked hard to restore the historic down town district. The entire area was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the U.S. Department of Interior.

Guthrie features several opportunities for the visitor:

State Capital Publishing Museum, 301 W. Harrison. Features a restored territorial period printing house with demonstrations and exhibits. The museum is home of the old State Capital, the first newspaper published in Oklahoma. Open daily except Monday.

Oklahoma Territorial Museum, 406 E. Oklahoma. Features exhibits on territorial and early statehood. Museum includes the original Carnegie Library completed in 1902. Tom Mix, early western movie star, taught gymnastics here before he gained fame in Hollywood. Open daily except Monday.

Walking tours of the historic district are provided each Sunday at 3 p.m. weather permitting. Tours for groups are provided at other times by appointment. Tours provided by Docents at the State Capital Publishing Museum.

Shopping and dining. Guthrie features several fine restaurants and ample shopping all within walking distance in the downtown district.

Annual 89er Celebration held in April featuring parade, rodeo and other events during the week long celebration.

Annual Statehood Ball held in November to celebrate Oklahoma statehood. Features formal dinner and dance with symphonic music. Sponsored by the Logan County Historical Society.

Annual Progressive Dinner & Historic house tour. Held in March and features dining and tours of selected historic homes.

Annual Folk and Arts Festival. Held on July 4th weekend and features art exhibits, music performances and related events.

Historic Automobile Rally and Road Celebration held September 15 weekend to celebrate the opening of the first paved highway into Guthrie, completed in 1926. Event features music, exhibits and food. Open to antique and classic car clubs and owners.

Capital City Band. A reorganization of the original brass band that was founded before 1900.

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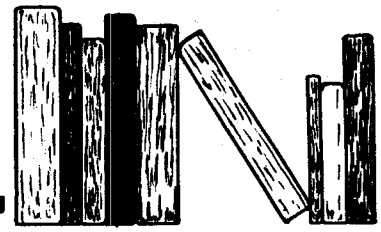
Books



A Century too Late

WILL HENRY'S WEST. *Edited by Dale L. Walker. Texas Western Press, El Paso, Texas. 1984. 208 pages. Hard cover, $18.*

"I am but a solitary horseman of the plains, born a century too late and far away. When I was fair of years I rode the endless combers of tall bluestem. I ride them yet, these lonely outlands of the past, a creature at once imprisoned and set free, a captive helpless to the years, entrapped thereby as everyman who is the son of mortal gods."

And so begins this most remarkable of books, this saga of a born storyteller, a man strengthened with the uncommon melody of language, a literary outride using his bent to describe in fiction the West that was.

Will Henry is primarily a historical novelist whose list of best sellers include *Custer's Last Stand, Who Rides With Wyatt, Mackenna's Gold, Yellowstone Kelly, Journey to Shiloh,* and *I, Tom Horn.*

From Where the Sun Now Stands is one of the 25 best western novels of all time. Forty-six of Henry's 53 books have been published in hardcover by prestigious houses, an unmatched record. Movie companies purchased 15 books and actually filmed eight.

Will Henry's West is about Henry, his books, his views on life, literature, Indians, and "Out There." It includes 11 essays and six short stories. Those who read the finest in western fiction might remember him as Clay Fisher, a pen-name he describes as "the worst mistake any writer can make as a commercial artist."

He had just finished *No Survivors* (his first novel and an immediate classic) and by contract could not write another piece for one year. However, his creative instincts smothered his legal prohibitions. Clay Fisher was born and *Red Blizzard* sold to Simon & Schuster.

In an essay "Sex in the Sagebrush," Henry describes the Old West as "poisoned by its own storytellers," a reference to the adult Western.

His insight into the Indian is equally startling and fascinating. "The Indian does not see the Earth as given to the People," writes Henry. "He sees the people as given to the Earth. They are not its owners but its unsleeping tenant caretakers."

Henry laments the erosion of heroes from the American scene, from its movies as well as its literature. The leading characters of today are "social losers whose grubby life and gray visions spell nothing but the degradation of the human spirit. Society becomes the villain and government the enemy to the end that there is no hero but the loser, no social cause higher than the gutter, no land and no law save the twilight zone of the streets."

Editor Dale Walker has written 11 books and is editor of "Roundup," a publication of Western Writers of America. His beautifully conceived introduction is a cornucopia of language, description and insight. The typography and book design are outstanding. With so many good things going for *Will Henry's West,* let us hope that it becomes the first in a long series about America's greatest Western storytellers.

—Leon C. Metz
El Paso, Texas

VALIANT SIOUX LEADER

RED CLOUD'S FOLK, A HISTORY OF THE OGLALA SIOUX INDIANS. *By George E. Hyde. University of Oklahoma Press, 1005 Asp Ave., Norman, OK 73019. Paperback, $8.95.*

Popularly regarded as the red menace of the plains, the Sioux warrior Red Cloud emerges in this book as a valiant leader of his people who often sided with the whites in controversies.

In this book, Hyde's diligent and in-depth research shows Red Cloud's warlike life and also his concessions to the Great Father's government. But when Red Cloud thought his land and people were threatened he struck.

He is credited with closing the Bozeman Trail from Fort Laramie to the Montana gold fields. The westward push of land and gold seekers across areas designated as Indian territory triggered Red Cloud's anger. As a result, the Bozeman Trail, with its forts, was dotted with overturned wagons, their canvas tops bristling with arrows.

The book is much more than a saga of the Sioux. Hyde's book deals with the history of the Oglala tribe and the family of Red Cloud.

From 1660, the Sioux started clearing away their Indian opposition, the Arikaras, Poncas, Crees, Crows and Cheyennes, and became a barricade to white immigration. But during some of this time, Red Cloud was settled at an agency, listening and agreeing to conciliatory talk from government officials. He became one of the greatest of Sioux leaders in all Indian history, going to Washington D.C. several times.

Royal B. Hassrick, an author of many books on Indians, wrote the introduction. The book contains numerous photos, several maps, index and detailed explanation of footnotes.

Hyde, although handicapped by near deafness and poor eyesight, wrote six books on Indians, including one on the life of George Bent. His *Red Cloud's Folk,* is the most brilliant and detailed history of the Oglalas ever compiled. Although the reading is slow going in many portions, the book is a valuable insight to the life, times and tribes of the West.

—Kathryn Wright
Billings, Montana

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TEN DAYS TO DIE the battle of Fort Ridgely

By MATHIAS FISCH

Photos Courtesy of Author
except where noted

DUST spiraled like smoke from the August-dry prairie as the Sioux gathered to hold council. Barely two miles to the east was Fort Ridgely, the only U.S. Army post in southwestern Minnesota. There soldiers were perched atop the tallest building, peering through a telescope and watching the Indians with growing anxiety.

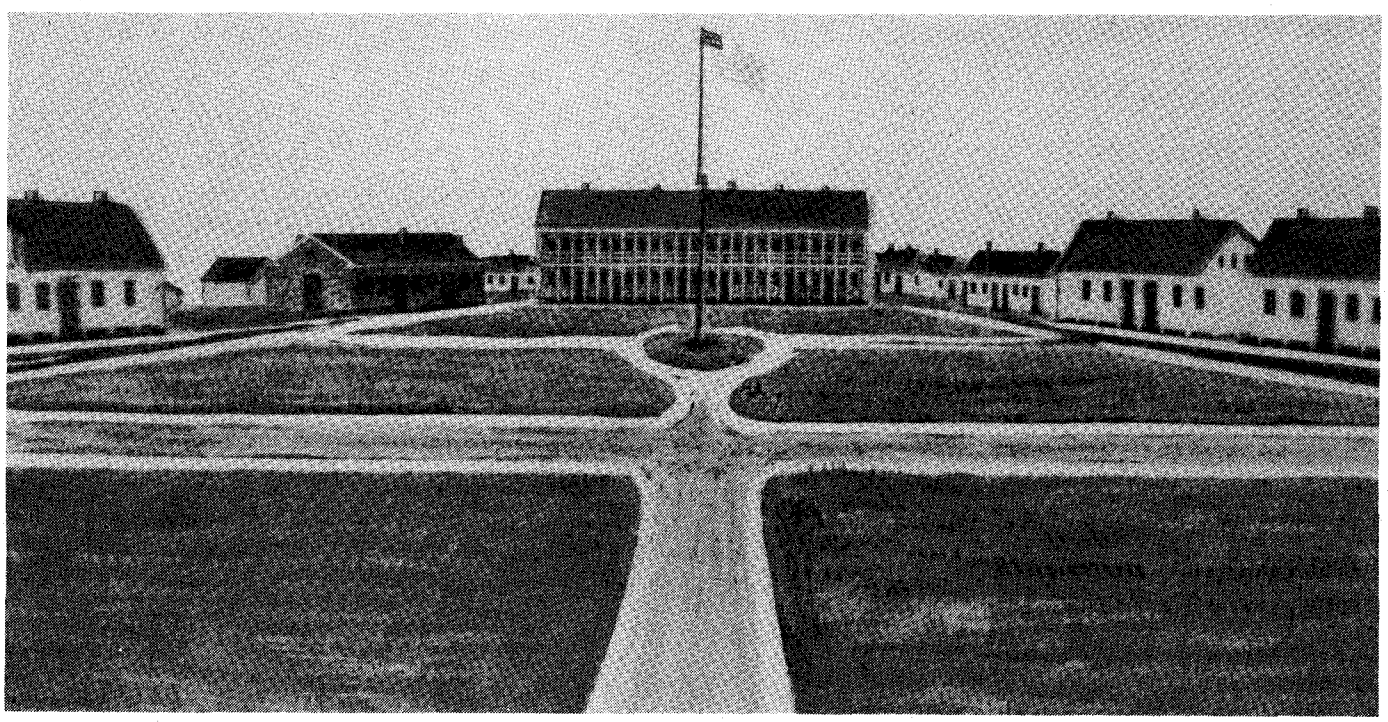
News of the Sioux uprising reached the fort mid-morning of the previous day, Monday, Aug. 18, 1862, when the first survivors of the surprise attack on the Redwood Agency reached the fort seeking protection.

They now numbered more than 200. Yet, there remained only 30 soldiers to defend them. If the Sioux attacked, the fort would have no chance of survival.

Soldiers recognized Chief Little Crow as he strode to the center of the council. Initially, Little Crow pleaded for peace, cautioning, "White men fight among themselves but if you strike at one of them they will turn upon you and devour you and your women and little children, just as the locusts in their time fall on the trees and devour all the leaves in one day."

But when he realized war was inevitable, he elected to be the leader. Now, he urged an immediate attack on the fort. But younger braves, intoxicated with the success of the previous day, argued for attacking a nearby town, where there would be stores to loot. Little Crow finally conceeded and the war party moved southward. Fort Ridgely was given a reprieve, but it was

Fort Ridgely, Minnesota, as it appeared in 1862.



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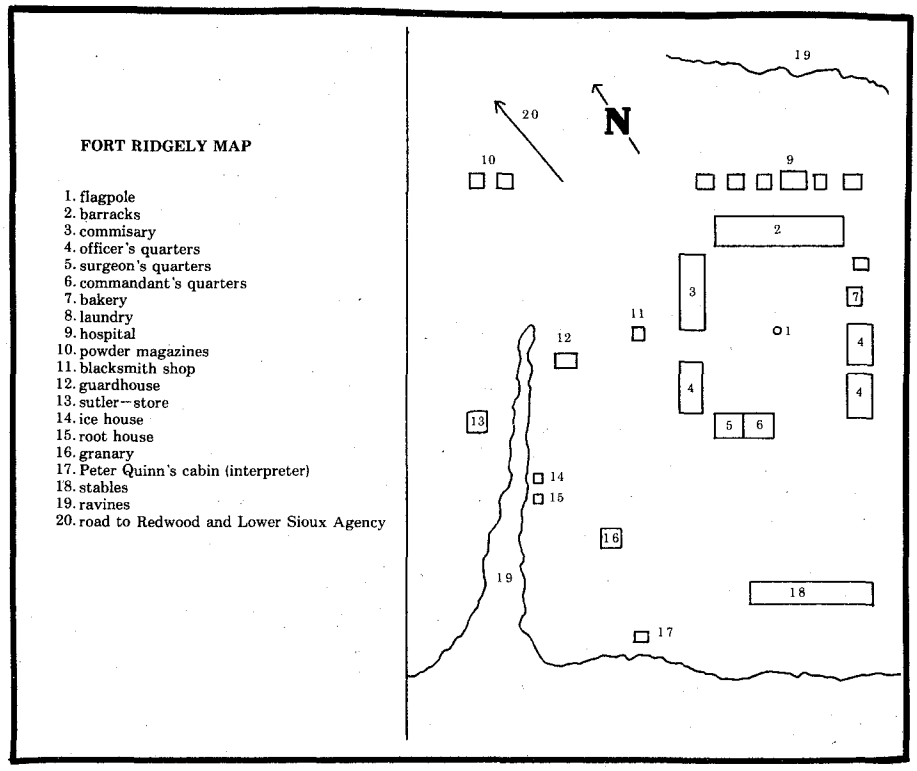


only temporary.

ACTUALLY, Ridgely was a fort more in name than in fact. It had neither a blockhouse nor a stockade and consisted of buildings grouped in a square around the parade ground. It was constructed on a plain, near the edge of a bluff of the Minnesota River.

Deep, wooded ravines, offering natural protection to attackers, stretched on the north and east. Another ravine, at the southwest corner, ran to within 100 yards of the corner building. Perhaps Major Randall said it best when he described the site as "a place the Indians would have selected for the building had they contemplated its capture."

When news of the Redwood devastation reached the fort, Captain John Marsh and 46 men departed "with elastic step" for the scene. All day and into the night frightened and often bloodied refugees, mostly women and children, scurried to the fort telling how the Sioux were spreading across the prairie.

Their gruesome stories were generally the same: A small band of Indians galloped to a homestead, killed the men, took the women and children prisoner, ransacked the premises and torched the buildings. Sometimes even the women and children were slaughtered.

One woman's abdomen was slashed opened and the fetus nailed to a tree. The only survivor of one family was a ten-year-old boy who had been struck twice on the head with a tomahawk. He regained consciousness and managed to reach the fort, bringing with him a five-year-old child which he had found wandering on the prairie.

Another woman struggled to the fort with holes in her back and legs and without hair or eyebrows, being badly burned. Her husband had hidden her and their new baby in a load of hay. After killing him the Sioux repeatedly jabbed pitch forks into the hay and set it afire before dashing off.

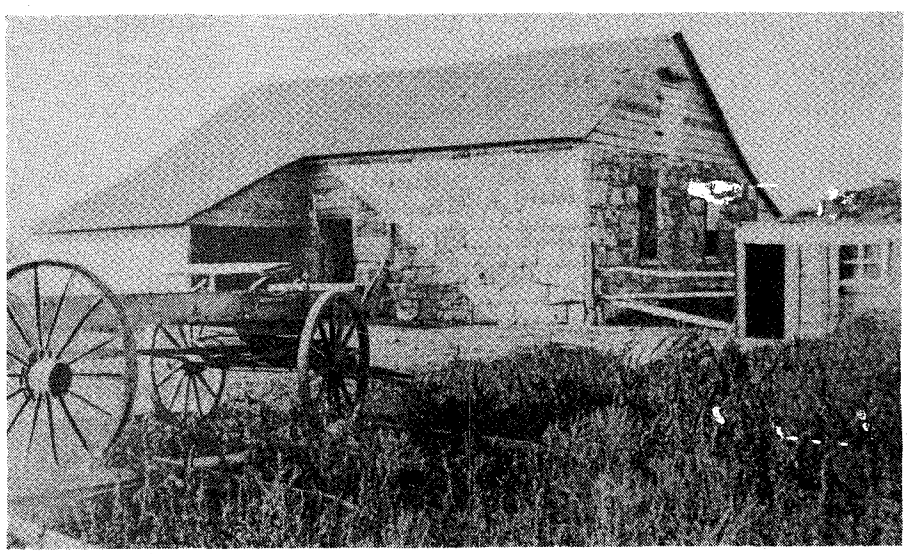
Nineteen-year-old Lieutenant Thomas P. Gere, in charge during Captain Marsh's absence, tried to accomodate the swell of refugees. His situation was aggravated by his being ill with mumps and he had to hide $71,000 in gold, the Sioux's belated annuity payment.

Shortly after dark, soldier Jim Dunn who had gone to Redwood, staggered back reporting, "The devils got us in the marsh by the river!" Half the men were dead.

Gere distributed the 22 servicable muskets and posted guards. The guards, already nervous, were even more so when they smelled burning kinikanic, Indian tobacco. A shrub's movement caused one man to fire, shouting "Indians!" Gere ordered all women and children moved to the stone barracks, even the wounded were taken from the log hospital. Here the crouching, cringing, grief-stricken masses huddled.

IRONICALLY, Lieutenant Timothy J. Sheehan and 50 men had left Ridgely just the previous day. Before marching to Redwood, Marsh had hurriedly written him: "Indians raising hell. . . return."

Gere now sent the following dispatch: "Force your march returning. Captain Marsh and most of his command were killed at the Lower Agency. Little Crow and 600 warriors are now approaching the fort and will undoubtedly attack us. About 250 refugees have arrived here for protection. The Indians are killing men, women and children. Have sent dispatches by mounted messengers to Governor Ramsey and commander at



Fort Ridgely was abandoned in 1872 and most buildings were destroyed. The commissary, here, was used as a barn.

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Fort Snelling, requesting reinforcements immediately."

On the second day of the uprising, Tuesday the 19th, just as the war council was disbanding, Sheehan and his men arrived back at Ridgely, having indeed "forced their march."

Later that evening, 50 volunteers who had been quartered at the fort a few days before also returned. These men, unlike the inexperienced soldiers, were hardy frontiersmen who could speak the Sioux language and who understood their method of warfare.

Sheehan, now in command, ordered the spaces between the buildings filled with cord-wood and grain sacks from the commissary. Citizens, as well as soldiers, were used for guards around the garrison, divided into nine posts and three reliefs. A picket guard was also kept.

About 1 p.m. on the third day, Wednesday, Aug. 20, Little Crow and a small mounted party appeared west of the fort, hoping to divert attention from the main band of warriors working their way up the ravines. The plan to capture the fort in the first rush failed as both sides maintained a hot fire at short range.

Ammunition was in short supply in the fort and the men were instructed to fire only when their shots would be "effective." Because of the fire danger, the magazines were some 200 yards from the fort.

RIDGELY did have one asset: It was an artillery post. This was the Sioux's first experience with artillery and they were terrified by the cannon shot which they termed "rotten balls" because the balls flew to pieces when fired.

At dark the firing ceased, but everyone in the fort remained where night found him, in expectation of another attack.

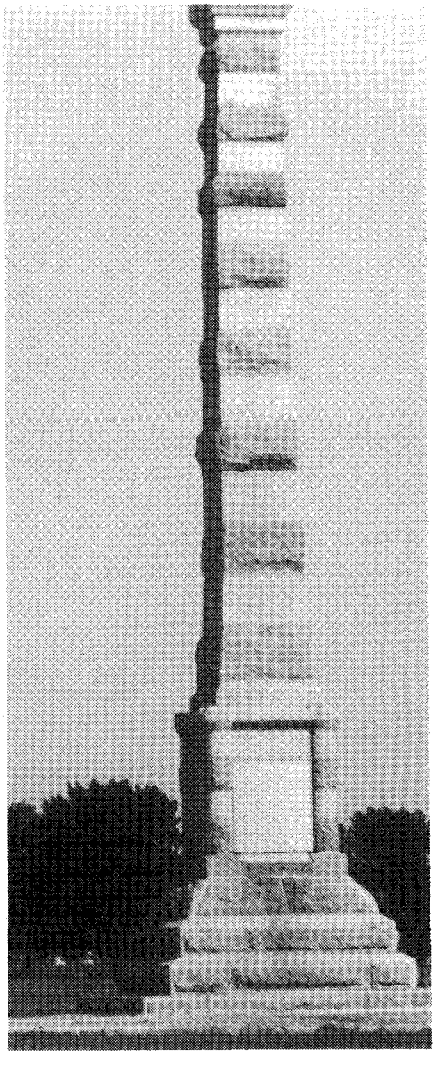
On the fourth day, a small band of Sioux skirmished with the fort in the morning and again in the afternoon. Neither attack lasted more than 30 minutes.

Ammunition being scarce, women gathered spent bullets which were melted down and poured into molds. Blacksmith John Resoft made slugs by cutting iron rods into pieces. These were used as cartridges.

Sergeant Jones opened some shrapnel shells and removed the balls. Women took pieces of paper, gave them a twist, dropped them in powder, added the balls, and gave another twist. The soldiers could fire these twice as fast as when they loaded themselves.

Courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

Above, Chief Little Crow, leader of the Sioux uprising of 1862. Thomas W. Wood is the artist. Below, Minnesota state monument where Fort Ridgely's flagpole once stood to Sioux battles fought there. It was erected in 1896.



Survivors continued to trickle into the fort.

Around 1 p.m. on the fifth day, Aug. 22, 800 Sioux attacked the fort with a sudden, ferocious onslaught hoping to quickly enter the post by their superior numbers.

Many Indians used grasses, goldenrod and ox-eyed daisies in their head bands, hoping to conceal themselves as they sneaked across the prairie or up ravines. The Indians maintained a heavy and continuous fire at the fort.

The hail of bullets, the whizzing arrows, and the blood-curdling war whoops were incessant. Fortunately, it had rained the day before, making the roofs too damp to burn from the flaming arrows.

The dismal whistling of the handmade missiles fired in return was nearly as terrifying to the Indians as their yells were to the defenders. With musketry fire, the soldiers swept the grass along the crest of the slopes.

AFTER fighting more than six hours, the Sioux departed.

The morning of the sixth day found most of the Sioux gone, but enough remained to encircle the fort and prevent most from entering or departing.

Sheehan dispatched the following message to Little Crow, having a scout place it in a split stick some distance west of the fort:

"I wish to say to you that if you allow your chiefs, braves and warriors to keep on murdering and scalping women and children your Great Father at Washington will send white soldiers enough after you to whip your forces, and all the Sioux Indians will be either killed or driven to the Rocky Mountains.

"If you keep on fighting, take women and children prisoners of war, and fight the white man like a man. No brave Indian warrior will kill and scalp women and children; therefore, I advise you to quit it and try and make peace with your Great Father. You can never take Fort Ridgely, as I have men enough to defend it, and as you know, after yesterday's fight, my big guns are working all right."

No further attacks were made on Ridgely during the next three days. Ammunition was so scarce the fort could not have been held in another battle, yet the men maintained their positions, barricades were strengthened, broken windows sealed and dirt placed on roofs to prevent fire.

There was a water shortage because no well had been dug at the fort.

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Although all barrels and tubs had been filled the first day with water from a spring at the foot of the bluff, it was too hazardous to refill them.

Rations were scanty. Mothers chewed bacon and hard tack, the only available food, and fed it to their infants. The Sioux drove off the livestock; there was no milk. Nursing mothers sustained more than their own. Sanitary conditions at the fort were "beyond description."

On the morning of the tenth day, Wednesday, Aug. 27, the guards shouted exchanges, pointing to a cloud of dust spreading in the east as quickly as a prairie fire. The telescope was passed to anxious hands. And then a joyous shout! The approaching figures were not Sioux; they were 175 armed volunteers, bringing ammunition, an advance of the main relief expedition.

Survivors flooded onto the parade ground, praising God in several languages for their deliverance. Many swarmed onto the prairie welcoming their rescuers. They had sparred with death for nine harrowing days and, at last, they were victorious!

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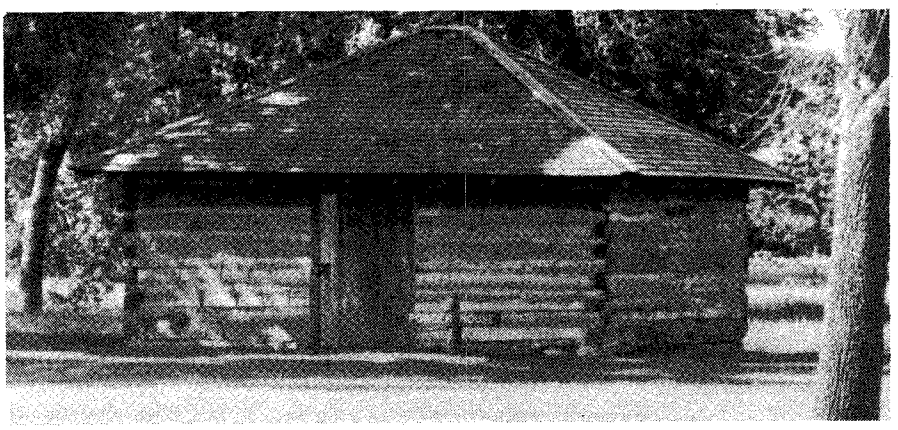

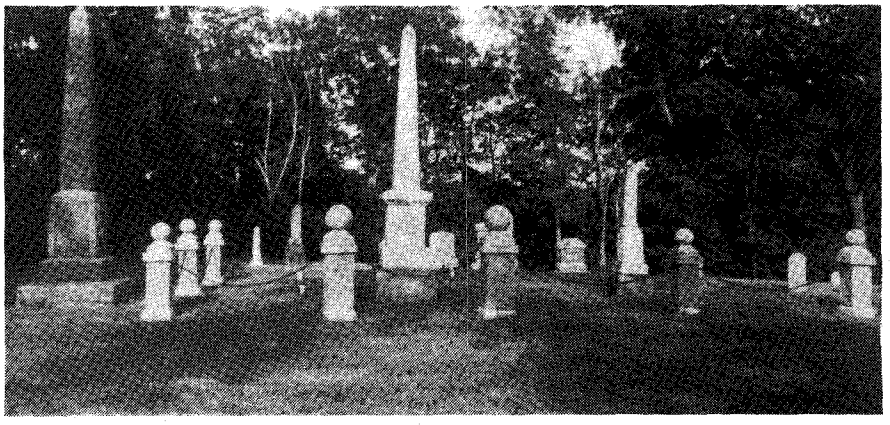

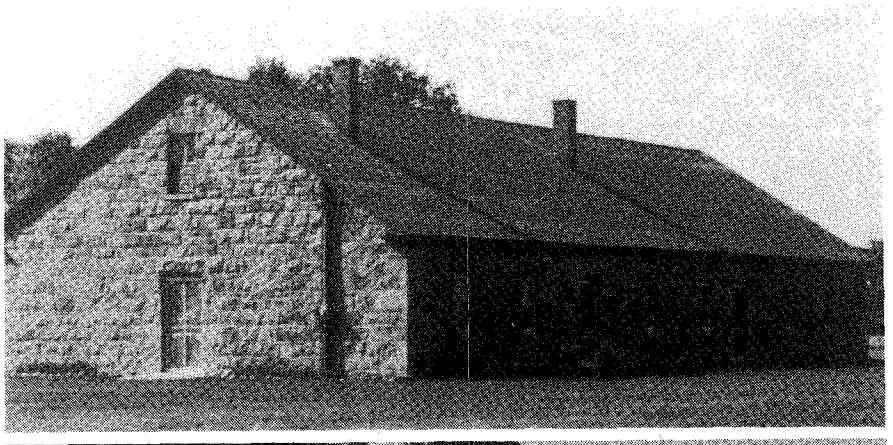

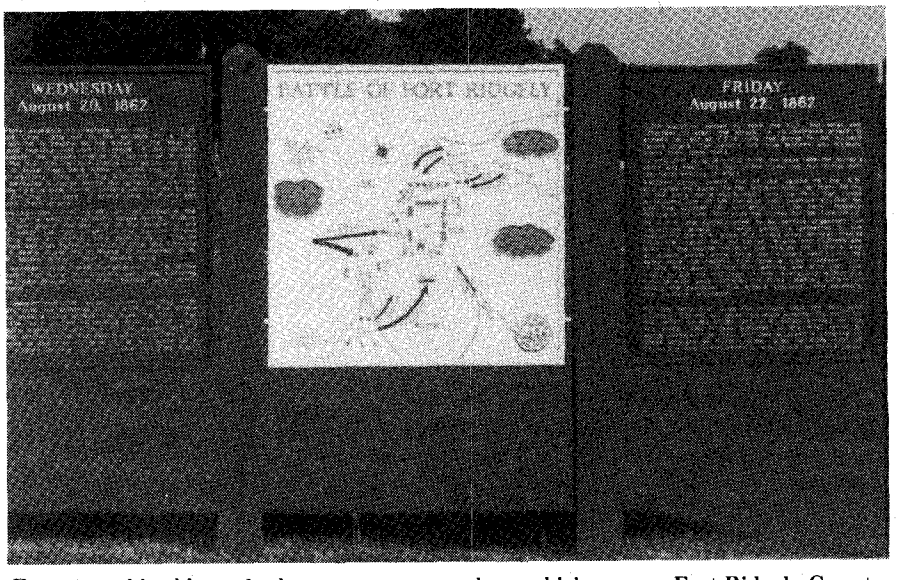

From top, this old powder house was once used as a chicken coop; Fort Ridgely Cemetery; the commissary, the only stone building of the fort to be preserved, restored in 1937, it houses a museum and marker on battle erected by Twin Cities Civil War Round Table.

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Green River Knives

They Played a Role in Opening the West

By DAVID PETERSEN
Photos Courtesy of Author

KNIVES, especially big knives, played a key role in the opening of the West, especially in the early 1800s when firearms had not yet developed beyond a one-shot capability and a ready backup weapon was often needed. It's fair to say that knives held a place of importance second only to the muzzle-loading rifle in the outfit of every trapper and explorer worth his buckskins.

And to a man in an Old West survival situation, the glint of a well-honed steel could have been either best friend or worst enemy—depending, of course, on which way the blade was pointing.

Unless it was sent whistling after an enemy, the frontiersman's knife offered the singular advantage over a rifle of never being in a state of discharge.

What was the blade most favored by mountain and plains cruisers of the early 1800s?

Generalizing, it would be fair to bestow the honor on the common butcher, or 'scalping,' knife: English-made in the earliest days of the Rocky Mountain frontier and selling at the mountain man rendezvous for around two dollars.

Several hundreds of thousands of these knives were imported from England—and later manufactured in America—and distributed throughout the mountain West during the first four decades of the 19th century (with some models, such as the Green River "buffalo skinner," hanging on until the final years of the 1800s). It was the primary cutlery for white trapper and Indian alike.

But looking beyond the generalization of "butcher knives," two king-sized blades did emerge as the decided favorites of buckskin-clad fighting men of the frontier: The infamous Bowie knife in all its various incarnations and the Green River, "early" and "late" models.

THOUGH the Bowie knife has received history's greatest acclaim, it was not—contrary to popular belief—the first choice of most Western trappers and mountain men. A less glamorous but more practical sticker, the Green River knife, was the pick of the majority of frontiersmen.

A well-worn original J. Russell and Co. Green River Works "Buffalo Skinner." This knife was purchased for a pittance at a garage sale in 1980 in Ignacio, Colorado.

One reason for the Bowie's lack of total acceptance among Rockies roamers was a matter of simple logistics. Invented in Arkansas and popularized in Louisiana and Texas by James Bowie, the knife remained primarily a product of Southern and Southwest frontiers.

Although this knife received wide distribution to Indians and trappers using old Taos, New Mexico as a base, the Bowie never found its way into the mainstream of Rocky Mountain rendezvous trade goods, which were freighted in almost exclusively from St. Louis.

But there was another, even more practical reason for the deadly Bowie's lack of popularity among trappers of the high country: With its massive weight and size and specialized touches such as hand guard—and in some instances, even a swiveling thumb-cup—the Bowie was suited to one purpose only: Knife fighting.

MOUNTAIN men demanded more versatility from what often was their only pice of cutlery. In addition to being functional for blade-to-blade combat, the trapper's hand weapon was often called upon to perform such diverse tasks as lifting scalps, trimming rifle patches, skinning and dressing game and serving as dining utensils.

For all of this, the common butcher—most often referred to by those who carried and used them as 'scalping knives'—filled the bill nicely while the larger and more clumsy Bowie was often impractical.

And among the generic classification of "butcher knives," one species excelled—appearing in two incarnations separated by 30 years or more.

THE first incarnation of this special cut of butcher knife was manufactured in England, most often at the Sheffield Works, and stamped "GR" on the blade, standing for "George Rex," or George the King. This was simply an export stamp, no different from today's "Made in U.S.A." But to trappers, the "GR" quickly came to stand for Green River, the slow, winding stream that flowed through the heart of their stomping grounds.

Because of the "Green River" designation and the high quality of

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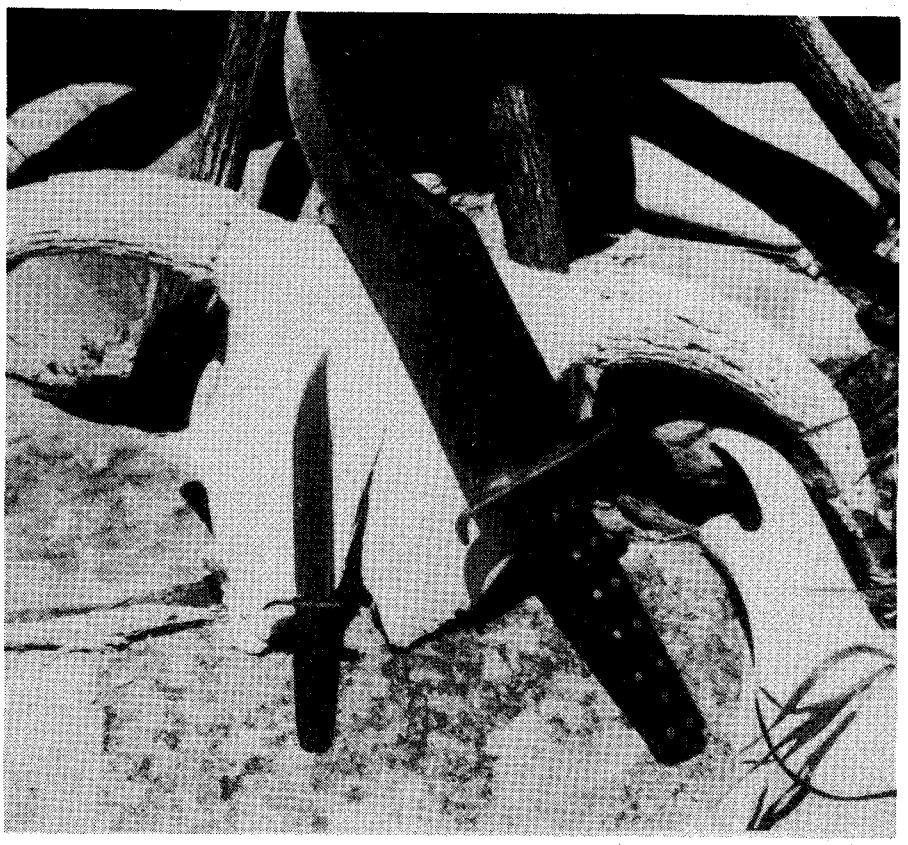

Variations of the Bowie knife include these two. Both shown here have "standard" features including large blade, "clipped" point and S-curved hand guard.

English Sheffield blades, these early imported "GR" knives soon dominated western trade. They were distributed primarily through the British Northwest and Hudson's Bay companies.

As a sidenote, a memorable mountain man saying came from the "GR" stamped close to the hilt on the blades of these knives: "Up to Green River" came to mean doing anything to its fullest extent, be it running a knife into an enemy "all the way up to the Green River," or performing any other job with equal thoroughness.

THE second incarnation of Green River knives occurred in 1834 when John Russell & Co.'s Green River Works began manufacturing skinning and butchering knives for the fur trade. Because they were made in America and bore the stamp "Green River" on the blades, which most certainly outclassed the mere abbreviation "GR" on the English product, the Russell knives became rendezvous-trade favorites immediately. Never mind that the particular Green River stamped on the blades of Russell's knives flowed through Massachusetts where his factory was located instead of the Rockies. To the mountain men, there was only one Green River and they had it all to themselves.

When compared to the Bowies, the Green Rivers were of modest length, averaging about twelve inches. The Russell knives had a single cutting edge, a drop or 'clipped' point (on the butcher or 'scalping' models), hardwood handles riveted to the one-piece blade and no handguard or other fancy additions.

Near the hilt was stamped the inscription "J. Russell & Co. Green River Works," riding atop a large diamond containing three smaller diamonds within, at the right and left edges and dead-center in the larger diamond.

Having recognized the possibilities of the fur-trade market, Russell stole it from the British, beginning in 1834. But finally realizing the words "Green River" were helping the Russell product, the British produced some competition. They stamped "Green River" on the blades of their knives in hopes of fooling at least the Indians if not the trappers and thereby recapturing part of the market that Russell had taken.

For the next few years the J. Russell & Co. Green River Works would turn out some 5,000 knives a year for the rendezvous and general western trade. One model, the Green River Buffalo Skinner, went on to become a favored tool of late-1800s hide hunters.

Because a large number of these knives were manufactured during the early part of the 1800s, a good many original Russell Green Rivers are still around today. Even a few of the older British "GR" models are available. Most of these knives are in private collections and museum cases, but a few, no doubt, are still performing many of the tasks for which they were originally intended.

Forget about the giant hog-stickers carried by Hollywood westerners in the movies. For the true Old West frontiersman, it was the Green River all the way.

AUTHOR'S Note: The Russell Green River Works is still alive and well today, turning out a large variety of professional and kitchen knives—including dead-ringer replicas of most of the original Green River models. These duplicates are made in both the original simple style and in an ornate collector's set complete with special engraving and display case.

Russell Green River Knives can be purchased or ordered through most retail sporting goods and hardware outlets.

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The Pioneers Talked Turkey

By BARBARA BLACKBURN

Turkey was common fare on parts of the frontier.

It's that time of year when we begin to talk turkey. Wild turkey, that is, the kind the pioneers hunted and ate. After years of overhunting and near-extinction, the turkey is making a comeback.

The Native Americans first taught whites to hunt the turkey and the scenes at Plymouth Rock are familiar to all Americans. But the common domestic turkey is not native. In fact, the turkey has had a rather roundabout trip.

Turkeys, which are related to the pheasant, were taken by Spanish explorers back to Spain in 1519, from where they spread across Europe. They were then brought back to this country by the colonists and crossed with native stock.

The wild turkey is slimmer, has a longer leg and neck and is more streamlined than his domestic cousin. The plummage is also darker, with a metallic iridescence lacking in the barn yard bird.

An adult hen weighs nine to 12 pounds while an old gobbler can pull the scales at 30 pounds. The old gobblers move in bachelor flocks and the hens and young group up but groups can number as high as 50 to 75 birds.

In colonial times, turkeys were as numerous as rabbits. Said one settler, "I have eaten my share of turkie cock that weighed thirty pounds." The Indians feasted on them and used their feathers for ornamentation on their clothes.

Wild turkeys were overhunted and their populations also were devastated by forest fires, deforestation and agriculture. Alien diseases from imported European poultry also debilitated the wild turkey.

The decline set in in the 1800s and by the turn of the century the wild turkey was nearly extinct. Since then, careful breeding and conservation has restored the population to about two million. Missouri led the states in turkey restoration but turkeys can be found in every state but Alaska. Real wild turkeys are state property and cannot be bought or sold. Those sold through catalogs can be up to 50 percent barnyard blood.

Hunting turkeys in many states is second only to deer and turkeys are very good eatin'. A 10-pound turkey will feed six and will be more flavorful than the barnyard variey. Wild turkeys have a higher proportion of bone to meat.

Some say a wild turkey is tougher than the domesticated bird but others say the only difference is the wild turkey must work for his living.

Some were distraught when the eagle, rather than the turkey, made the Great Seal of the United States. Ben Franklin said "the turkey is a much more respectable bird and withal a true original native of America."

Turkey hash and pot pie were favorites on the frontier, but pioneer turkey most often was cooked slowly in a pot with the rest of the meal. One-pot meals, like boiled turkey with vegetables and dumplings, improved any tough meat.

Pioneer women often cut the bird into pieces and steamed them before putting them in the Dutch oven to bake. Turkeys were also roasted on the tin kitchen, or spit, before a hearth fire.

Even if we're eating the domestic variety, a turkey dinner can recall for all of us our pioneer heritage.

(continued on page 63)

CLASSIFIED AD OF THE MONTH

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Western Roundup

Kansas Museum Opens

The Kansas State Historical Society dedicated the new Kansas Museum of History west of Topeka on June 22, 1984. The activities began with a barbeque and country and western music provided by B.J. and the Red River Special and the Scrapwood String Band and Cloggers. The museum opened to the public for the first time June 23 with the exhibit "Samples of Our Heritage."

Visitors listened to various styles of music from bluegrass and traditional fiddle music to jazz. Croatian, gospel, Mexican and Swedish music were also included in the day-long show. Several groups demonstrated farming methods of the past. National Park Service staff and volunteers from Fort Scott and Fort Larned were on the grounds to recreate the life of a soldier during the middle part of the nineteenth century.

In conjunction with the dedication the Kansas State Historical Society conducted a genealogy seminar. The seminar was intended to develop awareness of the many resources available throughout the state for genealogical research.

The Kansas Museum of History is located in Topeka, Kansas, at 6425 S. West Sixth. For information contact Colene Bailes at the Kansas State Historical Society, 120 West 10th, Topeka, KS 66612.

Courtesy Kansas State Historical Society

Drawing of new Kansas State Historical Society Museum west of Topeka which is now open.

10,000-Volume Library. The newly constructed Museum and Desert Garden in Lajitas, Texas, houses a library that has the finest books and literary material on the history of the Big Bend Country and the State of Texas.

This 10,000-volume library, headed by Virginia Madison, Texas historian, will be the place where students, writers, researchers and visitors can go throughout the year. It displays a complete collection of TRUE WEST magazine from its beginning in 1953.

The museum and garden were established by the Lajitas Foundation. The desert garden displays up to 200 plants and surrounds the museum.

Walter Mischer of Mischer Corporation in Houston owns the town of Lajitas and it is here he developed a resort town, retaining pioneer atmosphere, where people can enjoy the beauty of the West.

As a service to visitors, a 42-passenger bus takes them to Lajitas and the Museum and Desert Garden.

Friends of Buffalo Bill. The Friends of Buffalo Bill have announced the commissioning of a heroic-size monument in bronze to be located in his home town, North Platte, Nebraska. North Platte is also home for Ted Long, renowned artist and creator of the sculpture "His Last Farewell."

Sales of the sculpture enabled the organization to commission the monument. The 17-inch high bronze is mounted on a ¾-inch thick oval San Judas onyx or walnut base. It will be cast in a limited edition of 300, with each collector receiving a one-of-a-kind numbered sculpture, signed by the artist and carrying a copyright and a certificate of authenticity.

Ted Long lives on a ranch that his great grandfather homesteaded in the 1800s. His studio is an historic, century-old log cabin and he has an abundant source of inspiration around him; Sioux, Cheyenne and Pawnee Indians followed the great herds of Buffalo and hopeful immigrants traveled the Oregon and Mormon Trails within sight of his home.

Ted works in different medias: Oil, pencil, pen and ink and sculpture. In 1979 he was honored to receive the Old West Trails Foundation art award and has received numerous other art awards. The Buffalo Bill sculpture is recognized as one of Ted Long's outstanding works of art and is a magnificent tribute to the Old West that will live forever.

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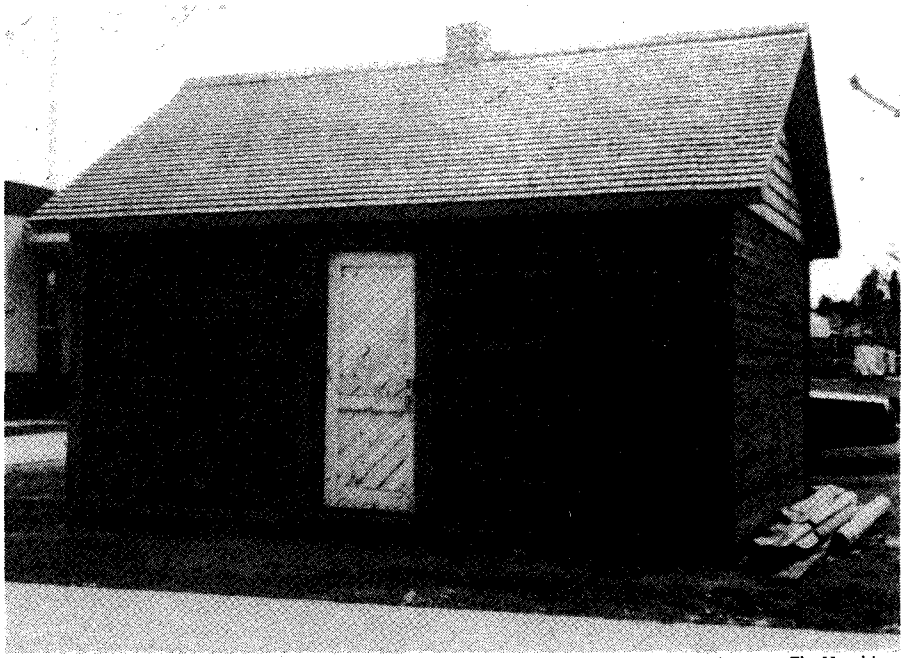

Courtesy Flo Hutchins

Crook County jail where Sundance Kid was kept—now preserved in Sundance, Wyoming.

The Friends of Buffalo Bill is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the perpetuation and enhancement of the memory of Col. William F. Cody. Information can be obtained by writing Box 1722, North Platte, NE 69103.

Sundance Slept Here. The Crook County (Wyoming) Jail opened for business April 18, 1887. Two months later one of the first two prisoners to occupy the jail arrived there accompanied by the sheriff from Miles City, Montana.

The name of that first prisoner was Harry Longabaugh, an easterner who would make a name for himself in the West as an outlaw. That name: The Sundance Kid.

Longabaugh took his outlaw moniker from his 18-month stay in the Crook County Jail which is located in Sundance, Wyoming, a small town nestled in the beautiful Black Hills in the extreme northeastern part of the state.

Harry arrived on June 22, 1887. The state governor later pardoned the young Longabaugh saying he looked as if he would lead a good life. No governor could ever have been more wrong as Longabaugh went on to a long life of crime as a bank and train robber.

The jail, which has been preserved until this day in Sundance, is small, about 14 feet by 18 feet. Inside was a small wood stove and possibly a wooden bunk. The structure had one small barred window and the outside walls were covered with galvanized steel siding, accounting for the longevity of the building.

The jail stood in an alley 100 feet north of Main Street until 1981 when it was moved to the court house square where it can be seen by visitors to Sundance today.—From Flo Hutchins, Sundance, Wyoming.

Railroad Fans. In Bishop, California, it seems there are quite a few people who fancy railroads and they take their fancy seriously. The Laws Narrow Gauge Railroad Museum is operated by the Bishop Museum and Historical Society.

There are lots of things to do and see at the museum and you can purchase all sorts of railroad memorabilia including model train equipment.

The Society is in search of the rest of you railroad fans out there. Dues for the society are $5 an individual or $7.50 per family. To join contact the Laws Narrow Gauge RR Museum, Bishop Museum and Historical Society, Box 363, Bishop, CA 93514.

Mariposa Self-Guided Tour. At the Mariposa County History Center in Mariposa, California, you pace yourself while you enjoy an authentic picture of its people and life, from the migration of its first inhabitants, through the Indian and Spanish periods, to the famed California Gold Rush to the recent past.

You can see original documents, artifacts and art work portraying how gold was formed and extracted, a typical one-room miner's cabin containing all his worldly possessions, the oldest courthouse in the West (1854), a street of shops reminiscent of the 1850s and numerous other exhibits which provide accurate and fascinating descriptions of "life in the mines" more than a century ago.

On leaving the main building you enjoy a stroll through the gardens of native trees and plants, tour the mining exhibits, enter the Indian village and can see a five stamp mill once used for crushing gold bearing quartz.

The History Center, including the gardens and outdoor exhibits, is largely the work of volunteers. Residents and friends of Mariposa County have given generously of their funds, which were supplemented by thousands of hours of volunteer services and many dollars in value in contributed material. It has been described as "The Finest Small Museum to be Seen Anywhere."

The center is a voluntary non-profit organization and admission is free; it is run by donations from the public. Located in the heart of Mariposa on 5119 Jessie St., the center is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily through Oct. 31, weekends only Nov. - Mar., closed January.

Color on the Colorado. Few people have the opportunity to see many areas of the Grand Canyon because they are so remote and difficult to reach.

Artist Dale Bratcher has covered a vast amount of rugged environment in order to capture the beauty of the Grand Canyon in his watercolor and egg-tempera paintings.

The exhibit Color on the Colorado can be seen at the South Rim Visitor Center at the Grand Canyon National Park, Grand Canyon, Arizona. The paintings will be on display Sept. 1-30; the center is open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily. Admission is free.

The artist, Dale Bratcher, will be in the Visitor Center Sept. 1 and Sept. 30. For more information contact Larry Frederick, Visitor Center Supervisor, (602) 638-7888.

Western Roundup is a report on places to go and things to see associated with the history of the Old West. Submissions are welcome. Information on scheduled events should be submitted at least six months prior to the event. Items on historic places are also welcome. Send information, including black and white photos to: Western Roundup, Western Publications, P.O. Box 665, Perkins, OK 74059.

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Recollections of an Early Montana Cowboy

By ROLAND VALENTINE MATTHEWS
Photos Courtesy Author

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Roland Valentine Matthews was 97 years old Sept. 4, 1983. He is perhaps the oldest cowboy in Montana. He can still ride a horse. Roland lives at the Eagles Manor in Lewistown, Montana.)

Roland Matthews, left, and friend, Art Mayberry, taken at the Mayberry home in Malta, Montana, in 1909.

I came from Kentucky, the state where I was born, where the corn is full of kernels and the colonels full of corn. I was born in a log cabin, I have split rails, cradled wheat, made sorghum molasses, went without - sox laid in front of the fireplace, and read Diamond Dick novels.

I got fascinated with the West, got hold of a pair of shoes and drifted up into Iowa and found a job tearing down an old building. There was another drifter working there who had been all over out West and wanted me to go with him. He said he went by the name of O'Reilly.

I asked why he did that and he said all of the railroad bulls were Irish and if they caught you bumming a ride and you gave them an Irish name, they usually turned you loose. We got in an emigrant car and got to Minneapolis.

The Great Northern was shipping men to Bowdoin, Montana for $2 or to Armington for $3 for a job mucking (I never did know what that meant). We took the one to Bowdoin for $2. That left us with a little money to eat on. They gave us a passenger coach to ride in.

They hooked us on train Number 3 that was a second class train that was better for us because it stopped at every station, which gave us a chance to get something to eat (a can of pork & beans, or cheese and crackers, or a can of sardines).

It was February, 1907 and they had had a hard winter. There were box cars along for stations in North Dakota and the snow was about level with tops of them. They had a big chinook in Montana and the snow was about gone when we got near Saco. This O'Reilly said to me, "We don't want to work at Bowdoin, it might be shoveling mud, so let's

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get off at Saco and get on the blind baggage and go right on to the Coast."

We went through Bowdoin all right, but when we got to Malta and they stopped to take water, the fireman climbed up on the tender to get the water spout. He saw us in there and he put that spout (it was about eight inches across) right over us and pulled the rope and drowned us both off.

It was in the middle of the night. We went over to the Castle Berg Hotel and got a room for 50 cents, dried out and had enough left to get breakfast, and, that's the way I got to Montana.

We were walking around next morning when a fellow asked us if we wanted a job, we said yes and he bought me a bed and some clothes and took us out to the Larb Hills to work on a sheep ranch. I had a job watching a bunch of lambs and digging holes for a shed, while I was resting. (It's a cattle ranch now and a good one.) When lambing was over he took us to Malta. It was shearing time and it seems that the sheep shearers went on a strike and they were hiring anybody, so I went in and learned to shear sheep.

Roland Matthews and wife, Beatrice.

I sheared for Saylor Brothers in 1915 (but more about that later). When shearing was over I got a job haying on a ranch 50 miles south of Malta, known as the Prouty Ranch belonging to the Prouty Commission Co., South St. Paul. They also had a ranch at Buford, North Dakota, that they used just for steers. We only put up hay for the saddle horses. (This place belongs to John Matovich now.)

I fooled around out there for a year or so, then went to work for the Long X Cattle and Horse Ranch. There were two summers and one winter that I never went to town. The old timers called it "going to the road." Them days I never got lonesome as long as I could get something to read.

I did burn up a lot of kerosene reading at night. One winter I sent off and got Shakespeare and O'Henry's works. I never got much of a kick out of Shakespeare (too dumb, I guess). I did like the James Oliver Curwood, and Jack London. In fact about everything I could get my hands on. I was south of the river when Zane Grey came out with "The Riders Of The Purple Sage" (the book that made him famous). Fred Gipson said to put your six-shooter under your pillow and read that.

I GOT the most kick out of running horses of any job I ever had. I changed horses five times one day. I got the horses you have heard the expression "throwing up their tails" about, that's exactly what they do. Two men can take them anywhere, one rider ahead of them and one behind, the one thing I didn't like, we ran lots of colts to death. Jim Cotter had a sheep ranch half way between the Long X and Malta, and we stopped there lots to run horses.

Cotter had a nephew that came out from New York, his name was Tommy Vaughn. They wanted to make a ranch hand out of him, but Tommy didn't think much of work. All he wanted to do was get on a horse and follow us around. Jim Cotter had a brother called Mickey that called me "Rawlins." Somebody asked him what kind of a ranch hand Tommy was and Mick told him, "He was just like that Rawlins, not worth a damn, only to ride a horse and dance." There was probably more truth than poetry to that.

The fall of 1911, I was on the roundup for the Long X. We had made two shipments and had another herd together 50 miles south of Malta, and the cook quit. The boss, Norval Wallace, asked me to cook until we got to town, so I did. We were camped on the stage road to Leedy when Helen Hadley and her mother came out and stopped and had dinner with us.

We made the third shipment and were going to make another one, but it turned cold and the ground froze, so we couldn't drive the tent pegs. The boss went to Chicago with the cattle and asked me to take the roundup wagons and horses back to the ranch. That was my experience as "Wagon boss."

That winter, 1911-1912, Ed Herman built a dance hall at Leedy. I was floor manager and this Tommy Vaughn kept after me to get him a girl to dance with. I always called him the "Wild Irish Rose." I recognized Helen Hadley there and I took him over to her and told her, "The Wild Irish Rose wants to meet the Boston Queen."

That's how Helen got the name of the Boston Queen.

I RODE over the best land there was. I didn't want to settle down. In 1913, I filed on a homestead in the present Garfield County, on Hay Coulee near the Wes Huston and John McCarter place, built a log house and rode by it once in a while so I could prove up on it.

I rode with the H-Cross wagon in 1913 and 1914, and for H. B. Varney. In the winter I stayed at the John McCarter ranch while he went to Honolulu. On Christmas I went down to Leedy after the mail. A heavy package came for him and I thought it was phonograph records. He had an old Victor phonograph, and the records were getting old and squeaky. We were getting a little tired of Ada Jones and Billie Murray.

I put in lots of time packing that package on my saddle, and when I got home with it and opened it up, it was a fruit cake John's sister had sent to him from Cut Bank, I think.

I was at Leedy after the mail the next Christmas and here came another one. We had a penny-ante poker game that

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Roland Matthews and Beatrice in December 1919, on Missouri River, shortly after they were married.

lasted about all night, so we devoured that cake right then and there.

Jimmy Ryan worked for John McCarter and one winter they were out sawing wood with a dull cross-cut saw and Jimmy said to John, "I wouldn't mind you riding the saw if you would just lift your feet up." John told him, "You better come in the house and get your time." He fired him, but he hired him back again. I don't know if it was that same winter or the next that Jimmy was there. John only had one good pitch fork; Jimmy took it to the hay stack and rammed it in the stack and reared back on it and it snapped right off. The hay was frozen and cold. John fired him again.

THE county was settling up pretty fast in 1913 and 1914. In 1915 I sorta stuck around my homestead, and as I said before I learned to shear sheep. I sheared for the Saylor Brothers. Ed seemed to be the main owner. They had a place up near the divide, between Squaw Creek and the Big Dry. We called that divide "Fiddler's Ridge." It seems that nearly all of the people that lived there were fiddlers.

Norval Wallace had a homestead joining mine and he always said when he was wagon boss and foreman at the Long X, that he was going to hire a negro boy to wake him up at 10 o'clock and say, "second guard." He was going to have a boot handy to hit the negro over the head with and go back to sleep. I reckon as how he never caught up on sleep.

During the depression, he had a Federal Land Bank loan on his land and a bank loan on his cattle, and they sent a man out to collect. He told him to take them, but they decided to let him try another year. Next summer he was out in the corral milking his cows, and the sun was about straight up. John McCarter came along horseback and said to Norval, "Ain't you a little late milking the cows?" Norval said, "Maybe I am but they belong to the bank and the bank don't do any business until after nine a.m." (The banks opened at nine o'clock then.)

GARFIELD County had more post offices and schoolhouses than any county I was ever in. I have danced in almost every schoolhouse in the county, from Jordan west. Lots of good people in Garfield County and a lot of my friends are buried there. I heard of a town about like Jordan, where a fellow put a saloon too close to the church.

The women told the Mayor that according to law, they were too close. The Mayor went and looked it up, and sure enough, it was so. He gave them 30 days to move the church.

I WOULD like to ride one day in the wagon train, as Sept. 4 is my birthday. I was born in 1886. If the weather is nice and I can get a gentle horse (might need a step-ladder, too).

The Long X (Reynolds Cattle Co.) shipped a train load of steers to Malta in the spring of 1909. They figured to run them two summers and one winter, so in the first week in August, 1911, we pulled the Roundup wagon to camp the first night out. They sent Joe Reynolds to Harlem to get a permit to work the reservation.

Joe got in to camp about 12 o'clock at night and it started to rain. It turned to snow and it rained and snowed for five days and nights without a let-up. We lost two saddle horses, chilled to death. That little creek was like a river and we had to get the wagons out of there. We had four horses on the wagons and three cowboys on each side with ropes tied to the wagon beds.

Norval Wallace, the X wagon boss, had bought Jim Thornhill's cattle. I guess Kid Curry had an interest in the cattle according to Walt Coburn. Norval paid $30 per head for them, with the calves thrown in. He made $3,000 on the deal and he split with Joe and Frank Reynolds, as their dad was part owner of the Long X and he was using the outfit to gather the cows.

Jim Thornhill had two boys. The oldest boy's name was Manley and I think the other was Billy. They rode with us until we got their cattle together then we headed for the road. We went right down the same trail that the wagon trains go on. Thornhill went with us to the road and got his money for the cattle and that was the last time I saw him. I don't know what his background was. He was a nice fellow to be around and work with.

We made three shipments that fall and everyone was practically the same route as the wagon train uses. The reason I said we headed for the road, people in those days didn't call it "going to town" they called it "going to the road."

WE went back to the mountains to gather the steers in May, 1909. Floree Dennison and Wallace had trailed about 800 two-year-old heifers to Hawley Flat and spayed them and turned them loose in 1909. They rented the U L ranch and

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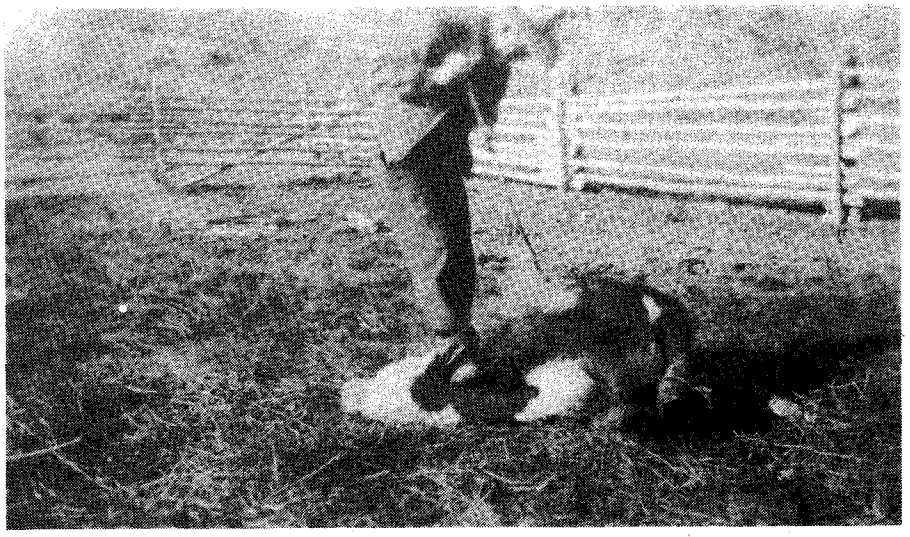

Roland Matthews brands one of his own first calves—in 1921.

had George Kusker as foreman. They decided to ship them in 1911, so they pooled with the Long X wagons and it made quite a crew.

With the Reps along too, we worked west to the Bear Paw mountains. We picked up a 14-year-old Long X steer. George Kusker said that they had him every year and he would sneak out of the herd at night, so we decided to put a bell on him.

George Kusker and George Armstrong took after him. Armstrong's horse stampeded and ran into Kusker and knocked him down, horse and all. The fall knocked him out, so we sent a rider up to Zortman to get a doctor. He came down there with a bottle of iodine and a full quart of whiskey. Just as the doctor got there, Kusker came to.

Old Joe Contway was along repping for Dudley Jones and he got about three drinks out of that bottle and was going to show us how to catch that steer. He got on his old horse, called Cottoneye, and the old horse turned it on. Old Joe was sitting him like a major 'til his curb strap broke. Joe went just as high as his bridle reins would let him, then he came down right flat on his back and knocked him cold. The Doc was still there with a little whiskey left. He got Joe on his feet and Joe had enough whiskey in him that he didn't feel much.

We finally got the bell on the steer, but he would still try to sneak out of the herd at night. He had long horns and when the night guards put him back in, he would get on the fight.

We got him around the mountain near the Hog Ranch and we decided to saw his horns off. Old Pete Jarvis, repping for John Survant, took after him, running as hard as he could. He jerked old Pete down, horse and all. Frank Reynolds was riding a horse called Whirling Jenny and he was going on to help him. The steer took after him and Whirling Jenny turned it on. Frank was pulling leather with both hands and hollering for help.

Joe Reynolds came to his rescue. Joe was the best all-around roper that I ever worked with. We got the meat saw and sawed the steer's horns off and got him to the railroad on the cars.

ADOLF Khron ran the livery barn in Malta and he wanted to go to Chicago. The boss gave him a pass to go down with the cattle. When he got back we asked him what the steer weighed and Adolf said he weighed 1,400 pounds, without the bell. That was the second shipment.

The boss decided that day to leave town and gave the cowboys all warning to be ready to roll by noon the next day. We got the chuck wagon and the bed wagon loaded, cowboys all mounted up, except two cowboys we couldn't find. Malta was not a very big town then, and I think we looked in every house in town but couldn't find them. Along about two or three o'clock, I believe it was, George Armstrong went by the Zortman stage that sat out it front of the Castleberg hotel and when he looked in the stage, there were Pete Jarvis and Van Edsall in there asleep.

We went back to the Larb Hills and worked all that country and back to the reservation. We camped at the Settum High Springs that was about straight west from the Hog Ranch.

Old Settum High and his wife were buried there in a tar paper shack. They were in a bed stead covered with a tarp. Her shoes and trinkets were under her side of the bed, and under old Settum High's side was his stuff. There was a monkey wrench about two feet long. One of the cowboys took the wrench and put it in the bed wagon. I don't know what he stole it for, as I know he was too lazy to use it.

THE X hired a couple of bronc peelers to break out some horses that spring. About all they did was skin their heads and pull their tails, but they did break them to stay in a rope corral. They turned them in without saddle horses for us to ride.

The wagon boss insisted on catching the work horses every morning. He had to swing a loop to catch a horse and those half broke horses would run his head in the loop. The boss would hand the rope to the night hawk, who sat on a horse, and told him to drag him out. Then he would ask me if I would ride him that day, and I said I would. I tied down several horses and got on them before daylight. I was getting the whole sum of $40 a month.

Old Sam Dennison, part owner of their outfit, was along and he had a feather bed. When he rolled it out the two ends would barely meet. It took four cowboys to load it. They called him feather bed Sam, but he didn't mind it.

WE got a lot of cattle together and were camped about the Jim Kipp place and one night after supper the cook got on his pet saddle horse and rode off. Warren Taylor was his name. The boss asked me if I would cook until we got to town. Said he would pay me $75 a month. I told him I had tried everything else so might as well try that. It turned out to be the best job I ever had up until that time.

It stormed a lot that fall and some of the cowboys slept in the cook tent. I would lay there and listen to them changing guard and then I would turn over and take another snooze.

Before I went to bed I would slice up a big pan of spuds and cut up the beef steaks and fill the coffee pot. I got everything ready and when the last guard came in he would start the fire and put the coffee pot on so all I had to do was to start frying beef steaks and potatoes and hollar, "come and get it."

Every morning the cowboys would load the bed wagon and harness the horses. I would have the chuck box ready and they would have the horses hooked up and they would hand me the

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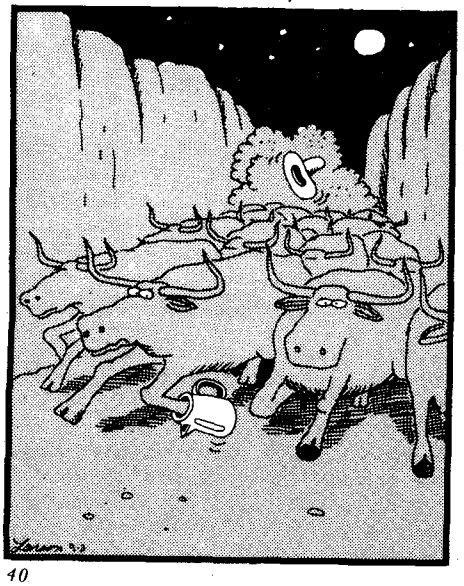
THE FAR SIDE By GARY LARSON



lines and say "here you are Greasy, we have the seat all sanded." I would like to say that some of the places the round-up wagons went, I sometimes wished the seat had been sanded.

We headed right down the way the wagon trains go today. The only difference is that round-up wagons camp on water at noon and pull out on the flats at night to get a place to hold the herd. I suppose the wagon trains stick close to the water at night.

We had a wood wagon with us, just two horses on it. We had a great big kid to drive it. We called him the "wood hawk." Fred Dakota was his name. He was part Indian and an awfully good kid but big for his age.

We were camped on Alkali right where the wagon train crosses, when the boss went to town. He smoked cigarettes, but never packed any. When he went to town he would buy a caddy of Durham and throw it down in the tent and tell the boys to help themselves.

He bought a big pair of Rockford sox and gave them to Fred Dakota. Fred went back in the tent and sat down against a round-up bed and put them on. He pulled his pants halfway up to his knees and sat there grinning. Will Reynolds, one of the owners, came in off the herd and said: "Jesus Christ, it is sure snowing out there." Fred Dakota said, "Let her snow, I got sox."

I worked on round-up south of the Missouri River. They didn't have a wood wagon when we went to brand. They gave two cowboys two dull axes and put them to cutting sage brush. The only trouble was, if we had a big branding, we would have to move the fire. Sage brush makes a wonderful branding fire. It keeps the irons clean.

We pulled out from Alkali and camped about three miles from the stockyards on some Indian land. Then we all went to town to celebrate. The boss gave us warning to stay sober. His warning didn't do much good.

I managed to get the mess wagon in the tent set up. I don't know what I would have done but Mrs. Wallace, the bosses' wife, and Mrs. Ott Cassidy, came out and helped get dinner. I was all right until I got near the hot stove. We fed 51 cowboys that day.

We were going to make another shipment but the ground froze so we couldn't drive the tent pegs. The boss wanted to go to Chicago and he asked me to take the wagons back to the ranch. I told him I would and that is the nearest I ever came to being a wagon boss.

Oldest and youngest of five generations, Roland and Nicole. Taken in April 1983.

The Long X went into the horse business after the steers were shipped out. I had a lot of fun running wild horses, but that is another story. And that's the way it was.

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Western Hunting Knives

Knife at right is from 1884 catalog of J. Russell and Co.'s Green River Works at Greenfield, Massachusetts.

By KONRAD F. SCHREIER JR.

Photos Courtesy of Author

NOW days people like to use names like "Bowie Knives" or "belt knives," but old-time sheath knives were listed in outfitters catalogs as "hunting knives." They were found in every respectable mail order "wish book" from which many westerners ordered. They could also be had in any old-time general store or trading post.

A good hunting knife was a tool lots of folks in the old West figured they could not get along without. It could be used to skin, butcher, cook and eat about any game from a rabbit to a buffalo. And sometimes it could be used to kill the game.

Knives could be used for cutting wood into anything from a toothpick to bridge timber and to cut down small tress. The hunting knife also was a weapon against hostile men or animals.

Hunting knives came in a number of sizes and styles. Back in the days of the old West two kinds of blades were made: The "spear point" and the "clip point."

The clip point was the style people often call a Bowie today. They were sturdy knives with blades from five to nine or more inches long. Westerners favored the six inchers as the most useful size.

Spear point blades had a sharp point and one edge sharp, but some westerners would sharpen the dull back of the knife's point. These knives also came in lengths from four to nine or more inches, but something about six inches seem to suit westerners best. A spear point hunting knife was a good tool for skinning and butchering. It was also a good knife for fighting.

ALTHOUGH the knife cataloged as a "double edged dagger" was often listed with hunting knives in the old days, westerners considered it a weapon and not as a hunting knife. Towns and cities usually forbade packing "weapons," and would not let people pack daggers. Many places in the old west a man could pack a hunting knife, but if he was carrying a dagger he could get in big trouble.

Hunting knives were made without "quillions" (bolster guards) which insured the hand would not slip off the hilt onto the blade. In the West, knives without quillions were used about as much as those with them.

These guardless knives were carried in what can be called Indian style sheaths in which just the tip of the hilt stuck out of the leather. This sheath

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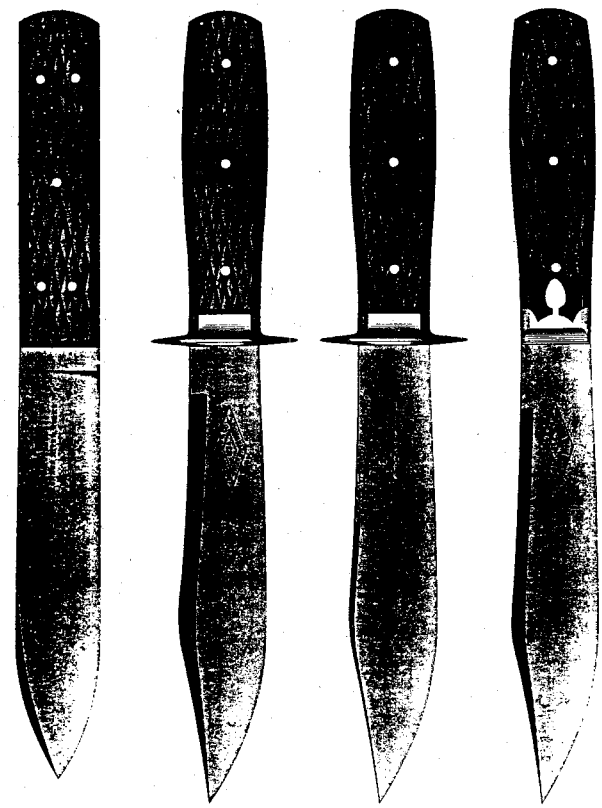
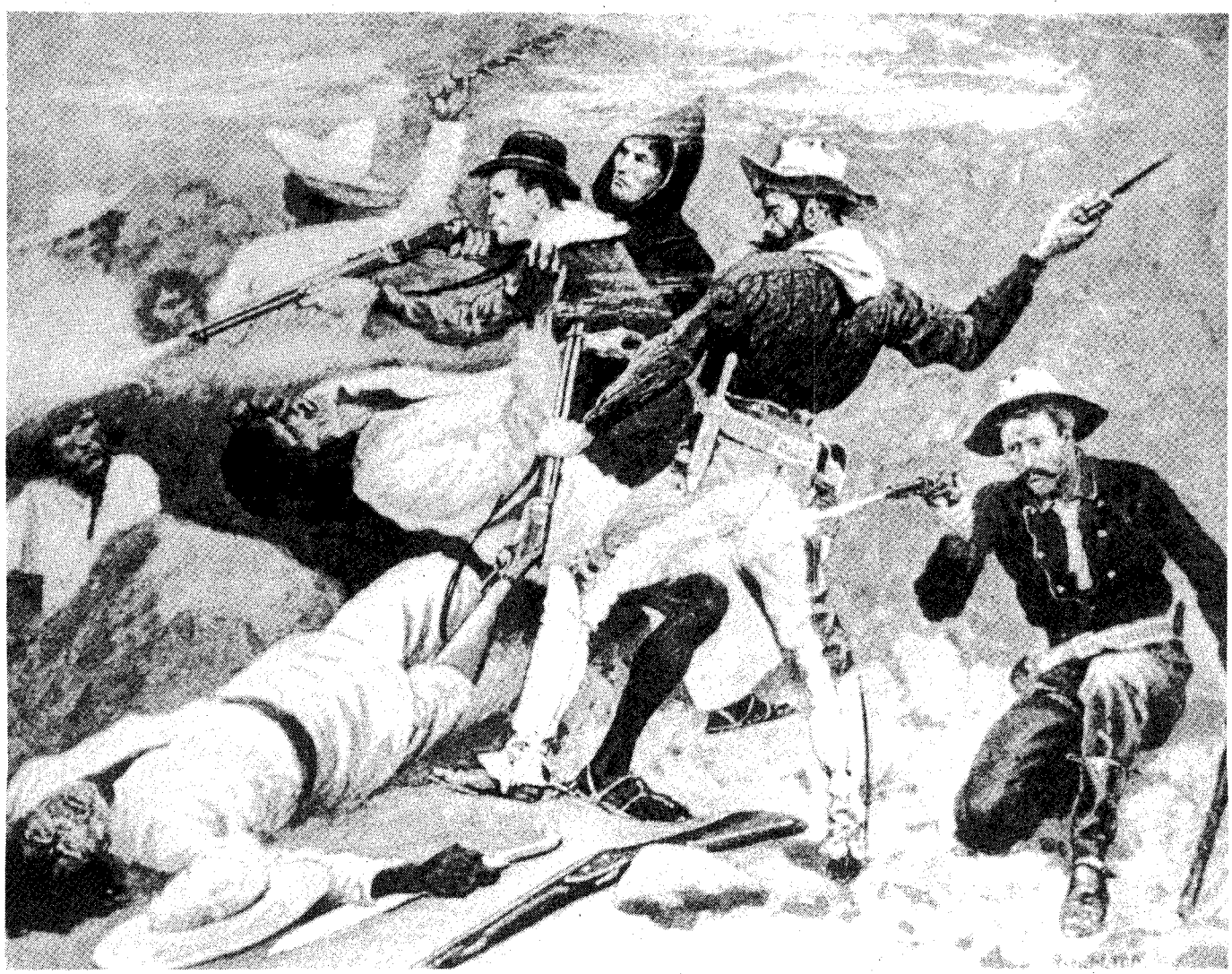
could also be used to carry a heavy bladed butcher knife instead of hunting knife.

Hunting knives came with sheaths and one common kind had a belt loop on the back. Another's back was higher than the front and had a belt loop or slits in the top of the back. Sheaths with no loop and a button for a special "frog" which attached the sheath to a belt were also used in the West.

WESTERNERS usually wore their hunting knives on an "overbelt" which did not hold up their pants. This also could be a gun belt which carried a revolver and cartridges in loops along with the hunting knife. The whole out-



At right, hunting knives offered in J. Russell and Co.'s 1884 catalog. Below, Frederic Remington painting showing man with hunting knife on his cartridge belt.



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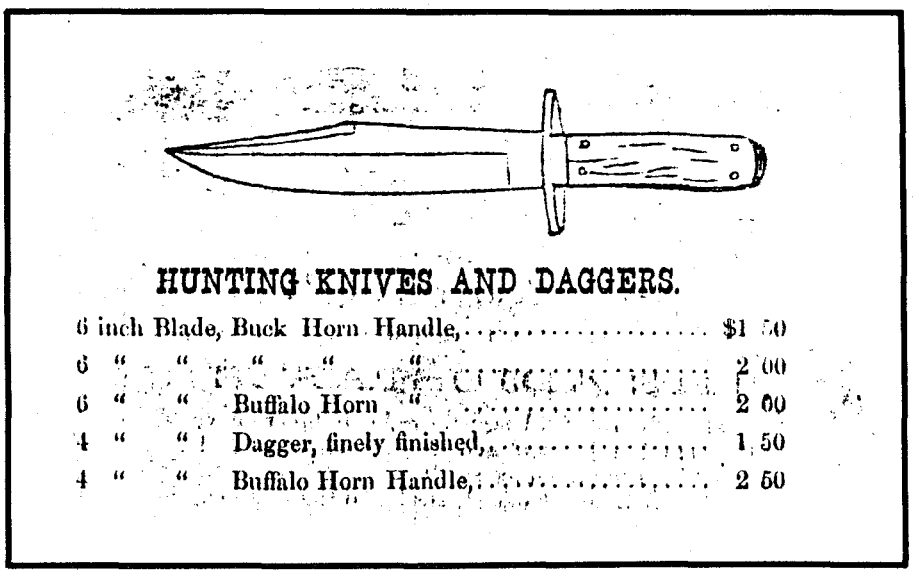

fit was worn over the clothing.

Sheaths would wear out and westerners would have new ones made. A lot of these had hair trim on the outside and many made by Indians were covered with bead work. Some were also trimmed with fancy head brass tacks as rivets.

A few carried concealed knives inside their clothing in places like a boot top but these knives were more likely to be daggers than hunting knives. Packing a knife this way was usually considered bad manners in the West. People packed hideout guns and nobody thought anything about it in most places, but a knife was just plain low down.

While many stores carried a good selection of hunting knives, many didn't have many other knives except butcher and camp knives. A good blacksmith could always make one, but these skilled craftsmen always had more than enough horse, wagon and machinery work to keep them busy.

Many folks found that for the hunting knife they wanted, a mail order catalog was the best source. From Civil War days on this was a good way of getting a wide selection of merchandise.

IN THE 1870s a good six-inch hunting knife cost a dollar or two. Ones with longer blades could run up to $2.50 or so. A half dollar or so would see to express delivery any place in the West. Of course this was a lot of money when most men made about $30 a month. Fortunately competition was tough and prices for goods and transportation in the West began costing less.

By the 1880s a good six-inch hunting knife could be had for about a dollar and even the longer one cost little more. Express charges were reduced by half. Men were still making $30 a month, but the money was buying more.

A dismounted cowboy with a hunting knife on his pistol belt, drawing by Remington.

SOME of the best hunting knives were made in the eastern United States, particularly in New England. There were also some good knives imported from Sheffield, England and from Germany.

Today a hunting knife with a six-inch blade, of the kind used in the Old West, is a rare thing, and examples in good condition are rare. They just plain got worn out by hard use. By the time a blade is kept well sharpened for ten or twenty years there isn't a whoe lot it left.

When a good hunting knife got too worn it was replaced and the old tool went to the barn, chicken shed, wagon tool box, or some other place where it might come in handy.

Fortunately a few good old-time western hunting knives with their sheaths got put away for one reason or another and have survived. These are collectors items and a number can be seen in museums. Considering how important they were in the old West, and how many old-time westerners packed them, it's really a darn shame there aren't more around any more.

Another Remington drawing showing mountain man with knife on his belt.

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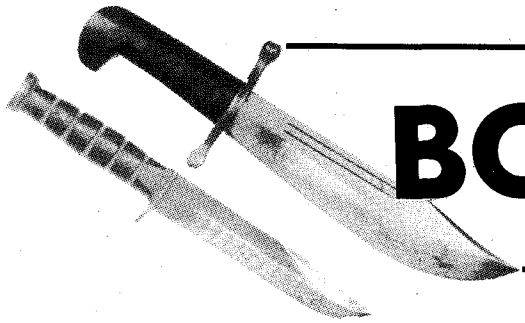


BOWIE KNIFE:

By DAVID L. PETERSEN

MORE than a dozen individuals have been credited, at one time or another, with having "invented" the Bowie knife. Of course, the preponderance of fame goes to the man who loaned the awesome fighting tool his name.

And though many of the facts have been lost in a fog of historical legend (and are debated hotly to this day by Bowie aficionados), it seems probable that credit for the creation of this wicked sticker should be shared by three men.

They are: James Bowie, the fighter; Rezin Bowie, the elder brother and almost certainly the designer of the knife's prototype, and an historically obscure cutler named James Black, who is credited by many with manufacturing the first true "Bowie knife," incorporating into it several of his own ideas.

In order to set the Bowie knife in its proper historical and geographical scenario, Black's story—or legend, as the case may be—is worth a quick telling.

ORPHANED at age eight, James Black was apprenticed to a Philadephia silversmith and, we can assume, gained considerable skill in that field before disappearing at age 18.

Then, in 1829 or 1830, Black turned up in Washington, Arkansas, where after a brief partnership with the town's only blacksmith, he opened a cutlery shop. The Pennsylvania-trained craftsman is said to have specialized in gold- and silver-plated knives, with some selling for the then-phenomenal price of more than $50.

But Black's primary (and most disputed) contribution to knife-making history was the development of a 12-step tempering process that produced a steel harder than any known to that time, including Damascus twist. Black guarded his secret process so carefully that he ultimately took it with him to the grave . . . but not before receiving a visit from James Bowie.

Jim Bowie's older brother, Rezin, had some time before fashioned a healthy-looking knife from the blade of a file and the foot-long weapon had saved James' life in the famous Louisiana battle at Vidalia Sandbar in 1827.

Now the younger Bowie wanted cutler Black to make one similar to it—only using his special steel-hardening process to produce the most deadly fighting knife possible. And he brought along a whittled model for the cutler to work from.

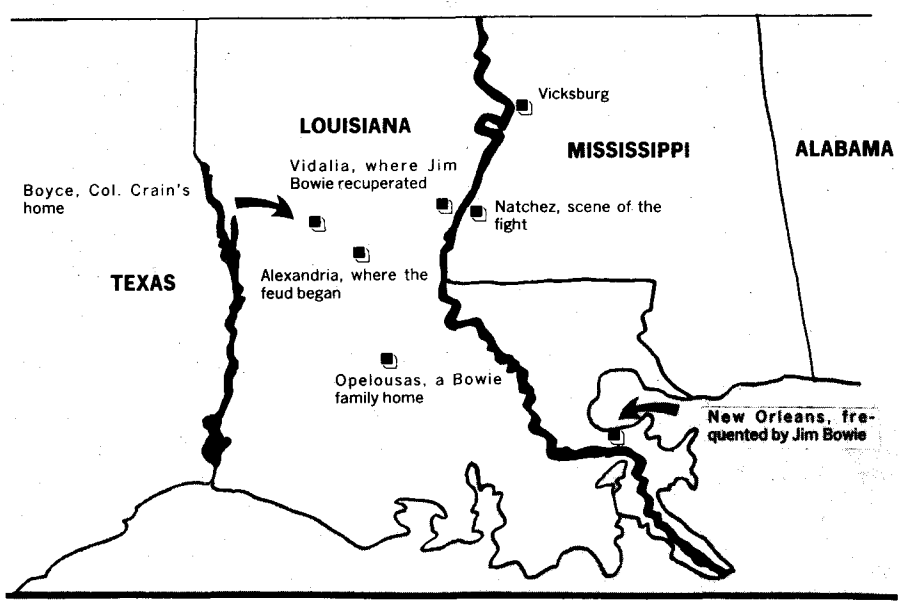
When Bowie returned some time later to inspect his custom-ordered knife, he found that Black made the sticker just as requested. But the cutler also fashioned a second version by incorporating some innovations of his own into Rezin's prototype.

Both knives presented to James Bowie that December day in 1830 supposedly had blades close to a foot long, were heavy enough to cleave through a human skull, and followed the classic, single-edged design, as opposed to the then-popular double-tapered dagger style.

But Black's version also had a razor-sharp cutting edge on the top, running the two-inch length of the clipped point. (Rezin Bowie later recalled that his homemade blade had a straight top edge. Indeed, Black is credited with popularizing, if not innovating, the clipped point).

This top cutting edge would enable a fighter to slice upward without having to turn the blade in his hand, a feature that could save precious split-seconds in a battle of blades. The cutler's version also sported a brass hand-guard with double quillions, giving the beefy weapon the appearance of a stubby sword.

BOWIE hefted and examined both versions, pronouncing Black's model superior. The knife fighter thanked and paid the knife maker, sheathed his new sticker and began a ride southward along the Natchez Trace—a ride that would lead him eventually to three thugs who had been hired by one of Bowie's many political and business



James Bowie Country Map by Robert F. Palmquist

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LEGEND IN STEEL

enemies to end his career.

With his new weapon, Bowie reputedly dispatched all three in a furious four-blade battle. He then proceeded on his journey toward Texas country.

Between 1830 and 1838, James Black is supposed to have turned out several hundred knives of the Bowie design, but his meager production of individually crafted blades barely scratched the surface of the increasing demand for "a knife just like James Bowie's."

Ultimately, it would prove to take the combined efforts of more than 40 British and American manufacturers to meet the market.

Of the wide array of Bowies to appear over the next few years, the English Sheffield versions were considered to be at the top of the heap. But even the best efforts of England's finest cutlers never matched the quality and beauty of James Black's secret-process product. Or so says legend.

NOW seems the most appropriate point at which to give the detractors of this legend their fair due. According to this school of thought, any claims that Black made hundreds of Bowie knives—or even *one*—must be disregarded, since not a single specimen positively identifiable as a James Black product has been found.

Certainly, this lack of even one out of a supposed large number of steel artifacts casts doubt on the story. However, a cutler named James Black *did* have a shop in the then-thriving town of Washington, Arkansas in 1830. The Bowie clan *was* known to frequent that area at about that time. And *somebody* had to have made the Colonel's little sword.

And too, more than a few notable historical researchers and writers have been convinced enough to "buy in" to the legend. The reader is invited at this point to draw his own conclusions.

The Bowie certainly was conceived and popularized in the South and remained primarily a southern border weapon. For a score and more years prior to the Civil War, the newspapers of major Southern cities carried almost daily accounts of violent deaths resulting form duels and brawls fought with the "ghastly Bowie knife."

Several Southern states enacted legislation to outlaw the carrying of this weapon. (Though the Bowie found some acceptance among western trappers and frontiersmen—principally those working out of Taos and Santa Fe—it was designed specifically for fighting and thus was impractical for the varied needs of these men, who could afford to carry along no excess baggage).

TODAY, whether searching a museum for an "authentic" 19th Cen-

Jim Bowie and the 'Sandbar' Fight

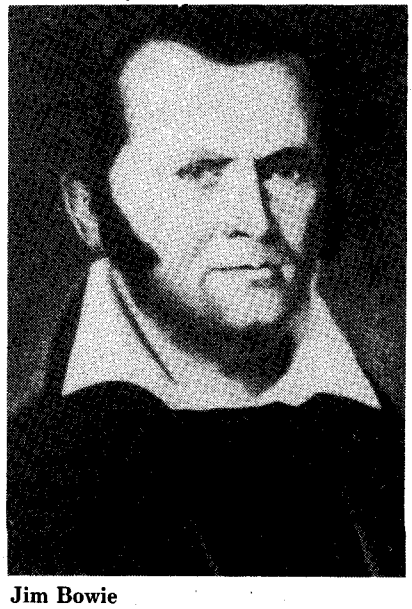
By ROBERT F. PALMQUIST
Photos Courtesy Author

ON Oct. 7, 1827, Thomas Smith, a friend of Secretary of State Henry Clay, wrote Clay a long letter from Lexington, Kentucky, full of local political news. Then in a postscript, he turned to the stories from downriver which were the talk of the Mississippi Valley frontier:

"A bloody affray lately took place near Natchez which will give your friend Judge Johnson pain. A duel, long talked of between two of his constituents from Alexandria, terminated without bloodshed in the neighborhood of that place: But the friends and attendants of the parties became engaged on the ground. Majr. N. Wright and Genl. Cuney were killed; Mr. Bowie and A. Blanchard dangerously wounded. These are all the particulars received in the Natchez paper by the last mail."

"Mr. Bowie" was James Bowie, later seeker of the "Lost San Saba Mine" and hero of the Alamo in Texas. The fight described by Smith became one of the most fabled in frontier history, largely because of Bowie's participation and that it was the first time he used his big knife in mortal combat.

PUBLISHED versions of the fight, as with accounts of other episodes in Jim Bowie's career, vary wildly. The presitigious Dictionary of American Biography states that "tradition makes him a participant in a desperate en-



Jim Bowie

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ıry Bowie or shopping for an accurate modern reproduction, it's difficult to say just exactly what is and what is not a "Bowie knife" (often spelled "bowie"). But look for several more-or-less essential features.

Foremost among the classic Bowie characteristics are massive size and weight, with the bulk of the blade's girth toward the front and beveled in a dropped V; a clipped point with sharpened swedge; a large, double guard with extended quillions; and a pommel or butt heavy enough to do damage as a weapon in itself. Bowie handles were made from a variety of materials, with cocobolo wood popular from the beginning.

During World War II, the Bowie went with the Marines to the Pacific Theater to garner even more fighting fame as the "Marine combat knife"—or K-bar (a brand name). And, of course, the Bowie has long been a favorite field blade of American hunters and outdoorsmen.

But perhaps the most useful incarnation of the Bowie tradition can be seen in the large numbers of hand-made art objects fashioned after the classic design.

JAMES Bowie would die a hero at the Alamo in 1836. Cutler James Black was doomed to personal tragedy and blindness before meeting a lonely death in 1872. But the knife they conspired to create from Rezin Bowie's prototype would live on, carrying the legend and a bit of shining history into the 20th century.

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Bowie at Sandbar

counter on the banks of the Mississippi, Sept. 19, 1827," thus hedging bets as to whether Bowie was even present.

Less careful writers have multiplied Bowie's victims from the one man he actually killed to two or even half a dozen. And, even though the best evidence indicates the fight erupted on the Mississippi side of the river near Natchez, most modern accounts refer to it as the "Vidalia Sandbar Fight." An historical marker at Vidalia, Louisiana, commemorates the event.

TWO years after the death of his brother James at the Alamo, Rezin P. Bowie wrote of the sandbar episode, describing it as "a chance medley or rough fight." It was not a duel, Rezin asserted.

It began with a duel between Dr. Thomas Maddox and Samuel Levi Wells. Had those gentlemen been left alone to settle their differences as the *code duello* dictated, it is unlikely any blood would have been spilled. The potential for bloodshed lay in the fact that most of the friends of Maddox and Wells who accompanied them to witness their "affair of honor" had, for one reason or another shot or stabbed at each other ineffectually in the past. They welcomed an opportunity to try again.

In his diary, Natchez planter John Nevitt noted the lineup on Dr. Maddox's side. "Arrived Col. Crain Mgr. Wright Doct. Maddox from Alex. Louisiana to remain a day or two," Nevitt wrote on September 16, 1827.

Robert A. Crain, originally a Virginian, maintained his plantation near Boyce, Louisiana. He had killed Dr. John Rippy in a duel after Rippy declined to accept his rent on a farm Crain was leasing.

The late doctor's apprehensions were probably justified, since Crain seemed to have problems with promissory notes. Having induced another Louisiana planter, Richmond E. Cuney, to endorse a note on his behalf, Crain defaulted. When his assets proved insufficient to satisfy the holders of the paper, Cuney as endorser had to sell some slaves to make good on the note.

This did not sit well with Samuel Cuney, Richmond's son and a general in the Louisiana militia, and on May 7, 1827, he took action. Joseph Walker recalled that he, Colonel Crain and one of the Blanchard brothers were traveling to Alexandria, Louisiana, through the Cuney plantation grounds "when we suddenly discovered Gen. Cuney coming out of an old house . . . with a gun in his hand and looking directly in the direction that we were approaching . . . . The Colonel (Crain) stopped his horse, got down and received his gun from his servant.

By this time Cuney had advanced a few steps and took deliberate aim. They both fired, nearly at the same time; Crain received Cuney's ball on the left arm, which circumstance I believe saved his life; Crain's shot did not take effect."

Cuney, Walker writes, was advancing on the fallen Crain to finish the job, "but I remonstrated greatly with him, on the impropriety of such conduct, and told him I thought he had done enough, that he had no doubt killed Crain, who I believed at the time was mortally wounded; at this moment Cuney desisted . . . ."

Crain's wound was not fatal. But General Cuney would have another chance. He was coming to Natchez that September as part of Samuel Wells' party.

The second of Maddox's party mentioned in John Nevitt's diary—Major Norris Wright—was Sheriff of Rapides Parish, Louisiana, and a substantial citizen of Alexandria, also serving as director of one of the local banks. Wright was a superb pistol shot. He reportedly had downed two men before coming to Natchez that September.

He had tried to kill still another: Jim Bowie. The reasons were mainly political. Wright ran for sheriff in 1826 against a candidate Bowie favored and won.

Afterward, when Bowie sought a business loan from his bank in Alexandria, the Major saw to it the loan was denied. When the rivals next met on the street in Alexandria, Wright drew his pistol and fired, wounding Bowie slightly. Bowie hadn't fallen, nor had he killed Major Wright. He had seized him by his coat collar and shaken him. The humiliation had been worse than a ball from Bowie's pistol.

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On Sept. 17, 1827, Nevitt, the diarist, recorded that the weather was "clear and warm" in Natchez. He added:

"Arrived the two Messrs Blanchard." Carey Blanchard and his brother, Alfred, also were from Rapides Parish. Alfred, while drunk, shot and slightly wounded T. Jefferson Wells, brother of Samuel Levi Wells, for reasons which now seem lost.

Afterward, a citizen of Alexandria recalled that "a difficulty" in an Alexandria ballroom between Wells and the Blanchards had been "scarcely prevented, a sword having been drawn from its cane on the occasion." (We will see more of "sword canes," those slim blades designed to be concealed in a gentleman's walking stick.)

The parties transferred hostilities to Natchez, across the river, to avoid complications created by Louisiana's anti-dueling statute.

They made no secret of their intentions. Newly-elected Mississippi Legislator John A. Quitman wrote in his diary on the 19th of the "party from Alexandria who have been for a few days in this neighborhood with the intention of fighting." And the Natchez Ariel understood that these "persons of respectable standing (12 or 15 in number) arrived in this city . . . with the avowed purpose . . . of settling some personal differences of long standing by private combat."

ON Sept. 17—the same day the Blanchards arrived to augment the Maddox contingent—Samuel Wells and his party crossed the river. With Wells were his brother Thomas; General Sam Cuney and the general's brother, Richard; a doctor, George McWhorter, who was to serve as Wells' second in the coming duel, and Jim Bowie.

Bowie was well-known in Natchez. Unlike his friends David Crockett and Sam Houston, he left no large body of papers and wrote no memoirs. As a result, even the date and place of his birth are disputed, with 1796 and Logan County, Kentucky, most often given as correct.

He was the third son of Resin Bowie, a Revolutionary soldier who served with "Swamp Fox" Francis Marion and Elve Jones. The family moved to Louisiana in 1802, and as he grew Jim participated with his brothers John and Rezin in a number of money-making schemes.

Some were legal, like running a steam-powered sugar mill. Others were more questionable, such as brother John's trafficking in Arkansas real estate of dubious title. Still others were plainly outside the law, but profitable, including Jim's and Rezin's slave-smuggling expeditions.

Modern version of the famous "Bowie Knife."

Jim operated out of Alexandria, where he stood in with the powerful Wells family, but was frequently in Natchez, playing cards with John Nevitt and other respectable folk. He was a handsome man, tall, big-boned, with auburn hair and dark blue eyes.

As he crossed the Mississippi with Samuel Wells and company, he carried a pistol and an outlandishly big knife.

"As I presumed that a second attempt would be made by the same person (Norris Wright) to take his life, I gave him the knife" Jim's brother Rezin recalled, "to be used as occasion might require . . . ."

Among all these antagonists, the challenged party and the challenger seemed to be overshadowed. But they had similar histories. Dr. Maddox explained late in life that "some difficulty occurring between myself and General Montfort Wells, or from some other cause which I do not recollect at this time, induced Samuel L. Wells to send me, a very offensive 'Carte Blanch,' which I accepted as a challenge, and it was agreed that we should meet at Natchez and settle the matter."

Wells family sources claim the "cause" which Maddox could not "recollect" was the doctor's retailing of gossip about the Wells clan which he heard from a lady patient and his refusal to reveal his source to irate General Montfort Wells.

The General, much in the manner of Sam Cuney with Robert Crain, accosted Maddox as the doctor traveled on the road in a carriage. As Maddox stepped down to meet his opponent, Wells fired, missing his target but striking Barnard in the knee and maiming him for life.

In the flurry of challenges which followed, Samuel Wells, a single man, agreed to substitute for his brother Montfort, who had a family.

Maddox on his arrival at Natchez enlisted Dr. James A. Denny, a Natchez physician, to act as his surgeon. The parties, the friends and seconds, were all in town. A formal challenge was handed to Sam Wells by Robert Crain near Peter Little's mill on September 18.

Crain, Maddox recalled, stated Maddox's terms to Wells. Wells protested he was the challenged party and had the right to set terms. Crain promised to discuss the matter with his principal, Dr. Maddox.

"You know, Mr. Wells," Crain said, as he turned to leave, "that I cannot meet certain persons."

"Col. Crain," Sam Wells responded, "I know to whom you allude. I pledge you my honor they shall not be on the ground."

Crain returned to Wells after a conference with Maddox who agreed to allow Wells to state them. Wells chose a rough-and-ready method, according to

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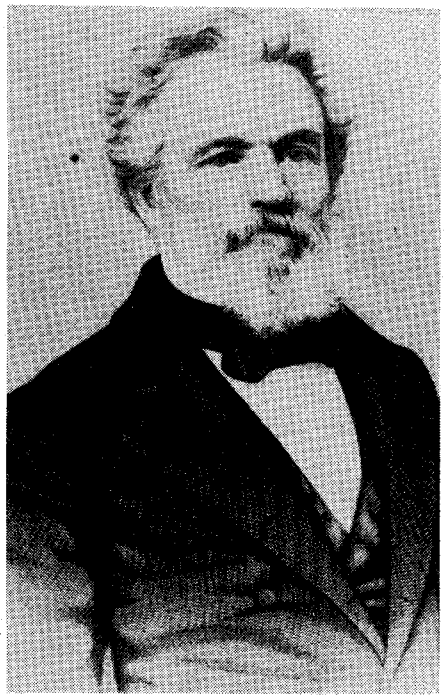

John A. Quitman (1798-1858) wrote about the fight in his diary.

Maddox's account. He called for the parties "to stand left side to left side, pistols down, and at the word 'Prepare' we were to raise our pistols in an opposite direction from each other, and at the word 'Fire' we were to fire as we chose."

The site, said Wells, would be "the first sand beach above Natchez, on the Mississippi side."

A HOT sun was overhead as the Maddox party, piloted through a swamp by William Barnard, neared the sandbar. The duel was to take place at noon. Dr. Denny, Maddox's surgeon, feared trouble and asked his friends, Drs. W. R. Cox and William Provan, to come along. As they arrived at the site, Crain recoiled.

There was James Bowie, mortal enemy to Norris Wright, and his own antagonist, Samuel Cuney. These were those "certain persons" whoses presence Crain had insisted against.

After some argument, it was agreed that the parties, their seconds and their surgeons should remain on the sandbar. All others—Bowie, the Blanchards, Sam Cuney and Norris Wright—would withdraw.

Bowie and Cuney went up a hill to one side, Wright, the Blanchard brothers, and the rest of the Maddox hangers-on to a grove of trees adjoining the sand. The remaining physicians, Denny and Dr. Richard Cuney, vainly argued against the duel. Their arguments failed.

Wells and Maddox dutifully stood, in finest gentlemanly fashion, fired, and missed. They fired, missed again, apologized to one another and considered their honor satisfied. Wells asked Maddox, Crain and Denny to the grove where Wells' friends waited to take a glass of wine. Crain shook his head.

"Sir," he said, "I could not meet those gentlemen at the woods, but sir, go ahead and meet *my* friends and drink and bury the hatchet."

The "chance medley" or "rough fight" commenced. As the opponents, now recoiled, moved to the woods where Wright and the others waited, Cuney, T. Jefferson Wells and Bowie ran at them.

"Now, sir," shouted Cuney to Crain, "is the time to settle our affairs!" Wells grabbed Cuney by the shoulders, and Dr. Cuney stepped between his angry brother and Crain.

"Don't, you shan't, Sam," Wells said to Cuney, afterward claiming Cuney "immediately acquiesced." He still held his pistol in hand and Crain, armed with two pistols, was taking no chances.

He and Bowie squared off, Crain thinking Bowie meant to kill him and Bowie intending to protect his friends from hostile fire. Both fired at once. Bowie missed and staggered as Crain's first shot hit him in the breast. (Bowie said later that he "was glad that there was so much powder in the pistols as all the balls passed out.")

Wells and Richard Cuney backed away, leaving Sam Cuney exposed to Crain's second pistol. Cuney and Crain leveled their weapons and exchanged shots. The previous May Cuney had shot Crain in the left arm; this September day, he grazed him in the same spot. Crain's bullet toppled Cuney, striking him in the left thigh and severing the femoral artery.

"Twenty pistols," said one witness, "were fired in half the number of seconds." Bowie, already wounded, was not relying on pistols. "Mr. Bowie," Crain wrote, "was rushing on me with his big knife--I wheeled and jumped back across the gullies in the bar, and as he approached, I clubbed and struck him with the pistol, which staggered and nearly brought him to his knees."

Maddox tried to grab Bowie but was shaken off as Bowie slumped against a piece of driftwood half-buried in the sand. He cleared his head amid the blood and smoke in time to see Major Norris Wright and the Blanchard brothers advancing on him.

"You damned rascal," Bowie shouted at Wright, "don't you shoot me!" Wright fired. Someone—perhaps George McWhorter, who was observed nearby—handed Bowie a fresh pistol. Bowie's bullet creased Wright's side, then Jim Bowie staggered over the snag carrying Wright's bullet in his hip. He slashed Alfred Blanchard who retreated. Jefferson Wells took the opportunity to even old scores by shooting Blanchard, breaking his arm.

BOWIE and Wright grappled. Wright rammed his sword cane into Bowie's chest where the thin blade snapped off. Bowie seized Wright by his coat, as he had in their earlier altercation in Alexandria. This time, the big blade Rezin had given him was in his hand. As Bowie sank to the ground, he sent his knife home, twisting it, he said later, "to cut the heart strings."

Maddox, having seized a shotgun from Barnard, returned from the woods. Sam Wells called to him. "Doctor," Wells yelled, "for God's sake don't do any further damage, for it is all over."

Wright lay dead next to Bowie. Sam Cuney was carried aside and bled to death from his severed artery.

"For God's sake, Crain," Bowie groaned, "assist me, give me some water, and help me to the shade." The Colonel did so. But Bowie's case seemed hopeless. He himself allowed that he was "damned badly wounded." The Natchez Ariel, reporting "this most horrid outrage" on Sept. 21, stated Bowie was "not expected to recover."

James Bowie did, of course, recover. Immediately after the fight he, the other wounded and the slain Cuney and Wright were conveyed across the Mississippi to Vidalia. Major Wright was buried there the next day. Bowie began his convalescence in the Vidalia House.

By April of the following year Bowie was in Texas. He met and won favor with Don Juan de Veramendi and his wife, Mexican gentry of San Antonio de Bexar and the parents of the girl Bowie would marry in 1831.

Bowie would be embroiled in many adventures, culminating in his death on March 6, 1836, at the Alamo. The "Sandbar Fight" cemented Jim's reputation as a fighting man.

His brother Rezin disclaimed credit for "the improvement in . . . fabrication and the state of perfection" his knife "has since acquired from experienced cutlers." But the name given to the blade stuck.

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Trails Grown Dim

Francis Descendants

I am looking for descendants of James Francis and Rachel Stuart who came from Ireland and settled in Ontario, Canada in 1822. Also, his brother Elisha Francis and sister Christanne who married a man named Jonathon Francis.

I would like to hear from any descendants of any of these people.—**C.E. Francis, Box 2066, Quartzsite, AZ 85346.**

Slack-Schlack

I have been advised that the name Slack is British, Swede, Finnish and German, spelled Schlack. Anyone knowing true origin please contact me.

I have been told that all Slack's in the United States trace back to a small Virginia town. If anyone knows the name of this small town, contact me.

I would also like to know exactly how many Slack families reside in the U.S. or Canada.—**M. Dale Slack, Box 254, Charleston, TN 37310.**

Goslee

I am looking for information on Henry Goslee; where born, wife's name and the rest of the family. His children were born in Messick, Delaware. After the death of his wife they started to Ohio. He became sick in New York state, where the younger son and daughter stayed with him. He supposedly died there, and where the children went is not known.

The daughter who went with the rest of the family was Jemina. The sons were Job, who is my great-great-grandfather, Simeon and Robert. The latter two went to Indiana with an aunt and uncle.

I would like to know the names of the son and daughter who stayed behind in New York. If anyone in Messick, Delaware, New York or Indiana knows anything about this family, please write.—**Marguerite Clementz, 145 White Pigeon St., Constantine, MI 49042.**

Dempsey Relatives

Philo Dempsey, born June 24, 1814, in Brutus, Cayuga, New York, married Lydia Walker in Allen, Alleghany, New York on Jan. 16, 1837, and moved to what is now Fennimore, Grant County, Wisconsin in 1844.

I would like to hear from anyone who knows who his parents were or what relatives he left in New York.—**Leon Holder, 319 Shin Oak, San Antonio, TX 78233.**

Riggs-Lions

Joseph Riggs and his wife and children left Illinois in 1881 for Brownsville, Oregon. His wife was Elizabeth Ann (Lions) Riggs.

Joseph Rigg's father was Thadious Riggs and his mother was Ann Riggs. His wife's parents were John Lions and Elizabeth Lions, all from some area in Illinois.

I need information as to where they lived in Illinois so I can continue my "Roots" search.—**Evert L. Riggs, Box 116, Grass Valley, OR 97029.**

Zahn Mystery

I need information concerning my grandfather's eldest brother, John Wesley Zahn, born 1846, Lafayette, Indiana. He and his brother signed on to fight in the American Civil War and were discharged in 1865. Here the trail goes cold.

His younger brother, William Presley Zahn was my grandfather. In 1869 he rode into Dakota territory re-enlisting in the army at Fort Abraham Lincoln. He was honorably discharged in 1874. His discharge papers were signed by George A. Custer who was to die at the Battle of Little Bighorn.

In 1888 he married my grandmother, a full-blood Indian and member of Sitting Bull's Hunkapapa clan. They had ten children, the eldest of whom was my father, the late Judge Frank B. Zahn Sr., senior judge on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation at Fort Yates, North Dakota.

The mystery of what happened to John Wesley haunts me.—**Frank B. Zahn Jr., 3048 10th Ave. So., Minneapolis, MN 55407.**

Nix-Wood-Young

A few years ago my letter of inquiry concerning great-grandparents Samuel and Nancy Jane Wood Nix was published. Thanks to readers of Trails Grown Dim the response was great! It put me in touch with relatives—who I did not know I had—in Washington state. They, in turn, had a copy of a family Bible record of Samuel's wife and children.

Now I'm asking for help again.

Samuel's father was Elisha Nix, born 1802 in North Carolina. His mother was Matilda Young Nix, born in Kentucky about 1804. They resided in Floyd County, Kentucky and Anderson County, Texas. Elisha died in Anderson County in 1867. I would like to know who Elisha's parents were and also who Matilda Young's parents were.

Samuel and Nancy Jane Wood were married in 1852 in Kaufman County, Texas. They raised their family in Erath County. I am especially interested in learning something of Nancy Jane's parents. Nancy was born Sept. 25, 1833, in Georgia. It is believed her mother was born in Florida. What was her mother's maiden name? Did she have brothers and sisters? These questions go unanswered. Any help will be appreciated and all letters answered.—**Lucille Diment Campbell, 11226 Manzanita Rd., Lakeside, CA 92040.**

Tindall-Reid

I am seeking the descendants of Robert Tindall, will dated Dec. 31, 1806,

(continued on page 57)

Readers' letters for "Trails Grown Dim" are printed as soon as space permits, so please be patient. Please type or print your query and limit letters to 150 words or less. Photos are welcome. We can't run current "missing persons" notices or lengthy genealogical requests, but we do attempt to print all letters as soon as we can. Any reader having information concerning persons referred to below is asked to communicate directly with the letter writer; please do not write to us.

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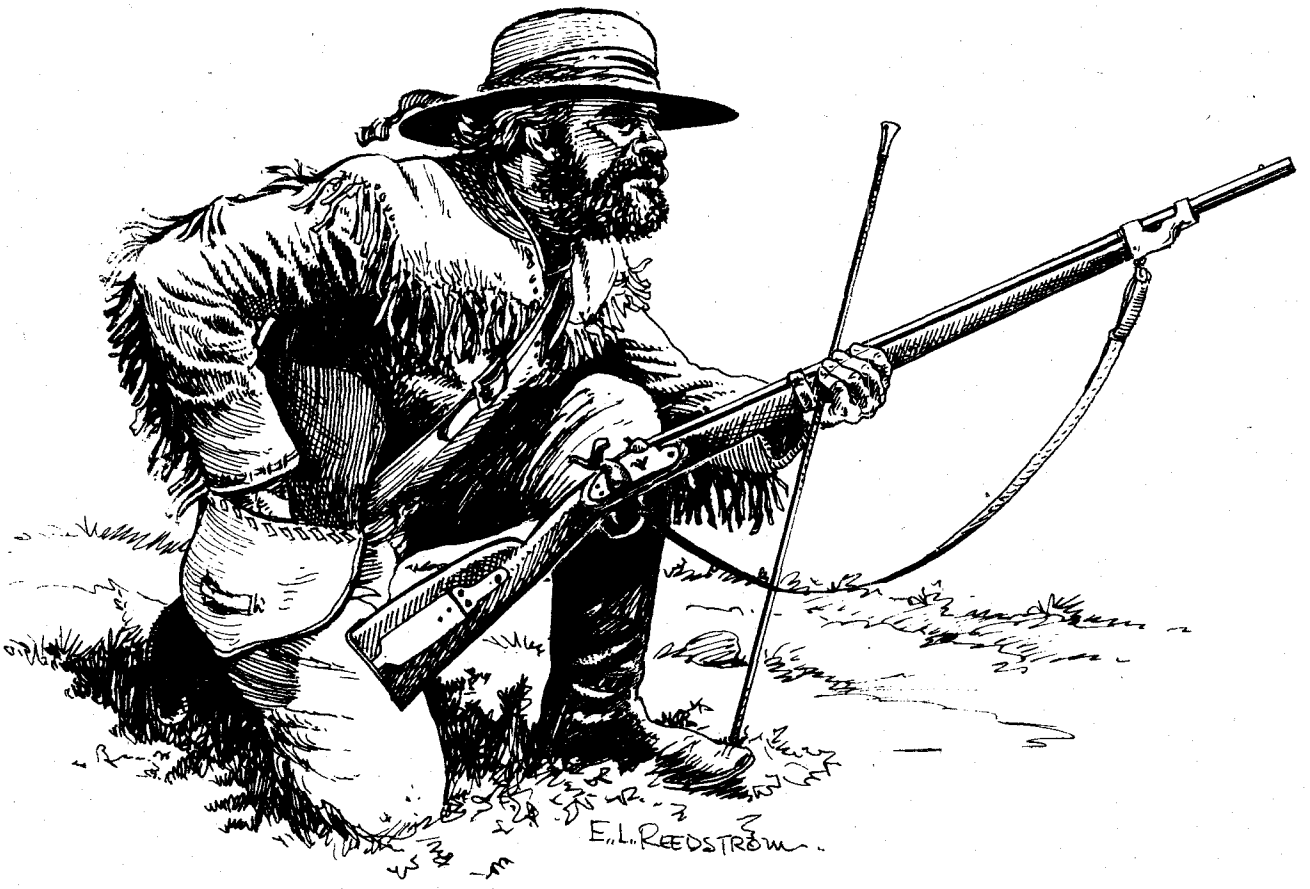

Mississippi Rifle on the Plains 1848-1860

By LOUIS A. GARAVAGLIA
and CHARLES G. WORMAN

Illustrations by E. L. Reedstrom

IN 1840 the U.S. Ordnance Department finally concluded that the flintlock was obsolete. Accordingly, the annual ordnance report for 1841 noted that "The subject of small arms has been revised with a view to the adoption of percussion locks for them; and models of new arms on this principle are in the course of preparation."

But unlike the new Model 1842 percussion musket, which except for its lock was nearly identical to the Model 1840 flint musket, the newly-designed percussion service rifle of 1841 was not simply a carry over of an earlier model.

Its predecessor, the Model 1817, was an iron-mounted arm with 36-inch barrel; the new rifle, although still in 54 caliber and rifled with seven grooves, had a 33-inch round barrel held to a stout full-length walnut stock by two heavy bands, and all its mountings—bands, trigger guard, buttplate, large rectangular patchbox cover, and even the front sight—were brass.

The mountings contrasted pleasingly with the browned barrel and dark stock, resulting in a military rifle that was not only serviceable but handsome as well.

Made by Harper's Ferry Armory and by private contractors in far greater numbers than any previous government rifle, the sturdy, good-looking Model 1841 soon became a favorite with both military and civilian riflemen. As such, it was destined to have a long and active life on the frontier.

Although Harper's Ferry made eight "Model rifles" in 1841 and additional patterns, plus manufacturing gauges in the next several years, the armory did not begin actual production until March 1846, completing 700 rifles by the end of June.

Private contractors, whose arms usually went to the militia instead of the regular Army, got into production somewhat earlier: In October 1842, Eli Whitney Jr., signed a contract for 7,500, and three years later Robbins, Kendall, & Lawrence contracted for 10,000. Whitney had delivered his first 2,100 by mid-1845, and another 2,700 of the guns—presumably all from Whitney—reached the Ordnance Department the following year.

BOTH soldiers and civilians referred to the Model 1841 by one of several unofficial names: The "Whitney rifle," for obvious reasons; the "Windsor rifle," because of those made by Robbins, Kendall, & Lawrence of Windsor, Vermont (and stamped "Windsor Vt." on the lockplate); and the "Mississippi rifle," its most popular nickname, because Jefferson Davis's Mississippi volunteers carried it during the Mexican War. At the Battle of Buena Vista, in February

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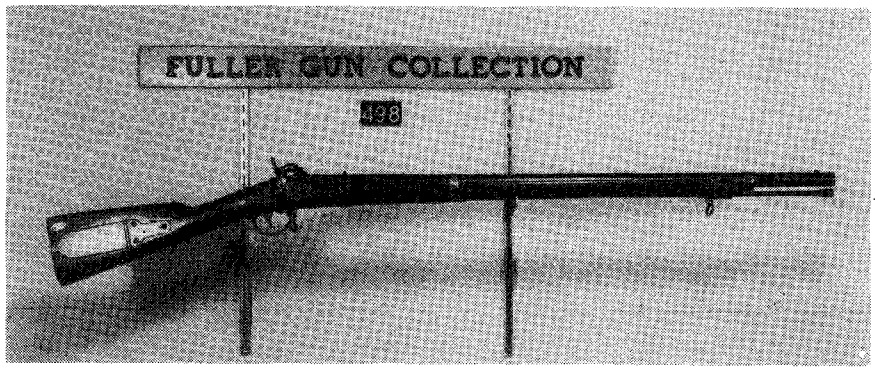

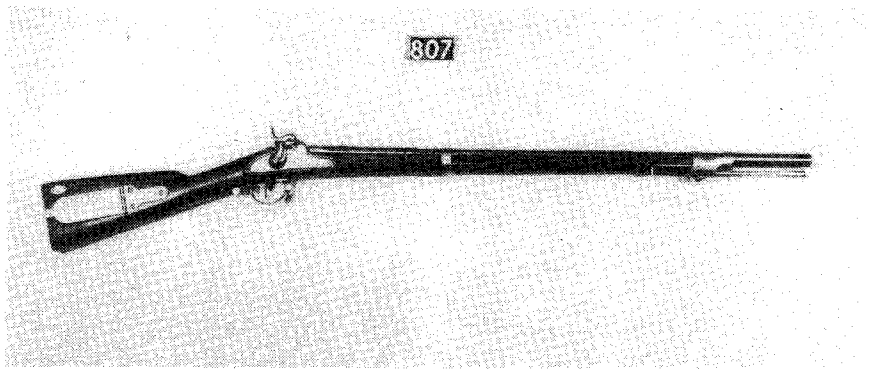

Top photo is of Model 1841 "Mississippi" rifle by Remington. Below it is a "Republic of Texas" rifle made by Tryon of Philadelphia. Except for lockplate markings, this is a perfect representative of original Mississippi Rifle.

1847, an eyewitness noted that:

"The Mexicans now advanced again on the plateau and surrounded O'Brien's battery, charging the guns with the bayonet under a heavy fire. . . O'Brien and what was left of his men, all wounded, managed to reach us. At this time General Taylor arrived on the field with May's Dragoons and the 1st Mississippi Rifles under Colonel Davis to close the gap in our lines. This gallant regiment passed by us with the light swinging step peculiar to Indians and hunters, their uniform a red shirt worn outside of their white duck pants, and black slouch hats, armed with Windsor rifles, and eighteen-inch Bowie Knives.

"(Then) down the plateau advanced toward Davis' 'Red Shirts' General Torrejon's splendid brigade of Mexican Cavalry; their gaily caparisoned horses seemed to fly over the ground, and it looked as if they would ride down the thin line of riflemen, who stood without bayonets disputing their passage. I heard General Taylor say, 'Steady, boys! Steady for the honor of old Mississippi!' and as the sharp crack of their rifles rang out and the leading horsemen went down, the General swung his old glazed cap and cried out, 'Well done Jeff! Hurrah for Mississippi!'. . . "

Other units also carried the model 1841 during the war, among which were Clark's Battalion of the Missouri Volunteers and the U.S. Regiment of Mounted Riflemen, raised in 1846. But because of the gun's 33-inch barrel, the Mounted Riflemen found it less than ideal as a horseman's weapon. They regarded it as accurate, but complained that it was inconvenient to manipulate in the saddle at any gait faster than a walk.

After the war the Mississippi became the mainstay of rifle-armed troops on the frontier, a position it held to the close of the 1850s. Between mid-1848 and mid-1855 the Ordnance Department issued more than 7,500 to the regulars, an ample number since in that period the entire regular Army amounted to few more than 10,000 men.

Production, moreover, was more than adequate to meet any demand: Between mid-1848 and mid-1855, Harper's Ferry alone turned out more than 18,000. Additional numbers supplied by various contractors such as Remington and Tryon boosted total Model 1841 production to more than 60,000 arms.

THOUGH it was designed and made as a military arm, the Mississippi soon found its way to civilians, especially those on their way west. When Lt. George Brewerton rode from Los Angeles to Taos with Kit Carson in 1848, his party included ". . . twenty hired men, three citizens, and three Mexican servants. . . all well mounted and armed for the most part with 'Whitney's rifle,' a weapon which I can not too strongly recommend for every description of frontier service, from its great accuracy and little liability to get out of order--an important point in a country where no gunsmith can be found."

Brewerton's party may have purchased the guns directly from Whitney or simply walked off with them after the Mexican War. However, similar arms were also available from commercial dealers in the west.

In the spring of 1849, with the California gold rush starting in earnest, L.J. Webster & Co. of New Orleans inserted this notice in the Picayune:

"For California. United States Rifles of the Latest Model. We have just received, from the celebrated manufactory of Robbins & Lawrence, a lot of the latest model U.S. Rifles, a perfect article. . . may be relied upon to shoot accurately 300 yards."

A less-expensive source for these guns was already materializing. In March 1849, a joint Senate-House resolution empowered the Secretary of War to sell military arms and ammunition at government cost to emigrants to Oregon, California and New Mexico.

The government sold large lots of surplus guns to civilians as early as 1825 and smaller lots even earlier, but these were usually worn out or obsolete.

In contrast, the arms sold under the 1849 resolution were near-new and eminently serviceable. Also, their prices were quite reasonable: $7 for a percussion holster pistol, $10 to $17 for a carbine, $13.25 for a percussion rifle and $15 for a percussion musket.

Notices advising emigrants of these bargains appearing in such papers as the St. Louis Missouri Republican found plenty of buyers. In the spring of 1849 John R. Durivage wrote that his company of travelers had secured new Mississippi rifles and percussion holster pistols from the U.S. arsenal at Baton Rouge.

Printing apprentice Enos Christman caught the gold fever at about the same time and went to California by ship, taking with him "One government rifle, one navy pistol, one small rifle(d) pistol. . . 1,500 (percussion) caps, large Bowie knife, 17 pairs new heavy pantaloons, 12 new flannel shirts, (and) one nightcap."

During an Indian scare in April 1850, an acquaintance borrowed his and a

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companion's "U.S. rifles," and when Christman got the guns back they were "not in half as good order as when he received them, as well as losing the extra tube (nipple) out of the (patch) box of Atlins'."

These rifles were almost certainly Mississippis, which had a recess drilled in the bottom of the patchbox to hold an extra nipple.

MISSISSIPPI rifles also accompanied a cattle drive from Texas to California in 1854, but not all of them completed the trip. In August one of the drovers noted in his journal: "Last night two Mexicans vamoosed the camps taking with them four of the best Horses in the drove, three six Shooters, two Mississippi Rifles and sundry articles of clothing."

At that time the Model 1841 was about to undergo some radical changes. The ammunition commonly used with it and its predecessors comprised a tight-fitting patched ball rammed down from the muzzle. It was slow and difficult to load, becoming progressively more so as powder fouling accumulated in the bore.

In 1852, however, the Ordnance Department began experimenting with a new projectile, the hollow-base Minie bullet. Undersized and unpatched when loaded, the Minie slipped down the bore easily, but upon firing the powder gases expanded its hollow base tightly into the rifling.

With the Minie bullet, rifles could be loaded and fired as rapidly as the smoothbore musket--three to four times a minute in practiced hands, about twice as fast as a patched-ball arm.

Between mid-1854 and mid-1855, Allegheny Arsenal alone made more than 900,000 "rifle expanding bullets" and loaded them into some 450,000 paper rifle cartridges.

At ranges beyond 200 yards, however, the expanding cylindro-conoidal Minie bullet proved so much more accurate than the round ball that the simple fixed sights on the Mississippi were no longer adequate.

Consequently, late in 1854, Harper's Ferry began fitting the rifles with adjustable long-range rear sights, also adapting them for brass-hilted sword bayonets. (The sights were either the "screw pattern" or the "slide pattern;" the bayonets were either the "ring attachment" or the "stud attachment").

By mid-1855 the armory had equipped a total of more than 3,200 rifles in this fashion.

Thus the 54 caliber Mississippi became the government's first "Minie rifle." Not all Model 1841s acquired adjustable sights, but those that did became, in Ordnance parlance, "long range rifles," and many so fitted went immediately to the frontier to replace the smoothbores in the infantry regiments.

As Augustus Meyers of the 2nd Infantry remembered it: "In March, 1855, great changes took place. . . The old smooth bore musket, which carried a ball and three buckshots at short range, was replaced by a long range rifle with a barrel of a dull finish and a sword bayonet."

Three months later four companies of the 2nd, Meyers's among them, began the long journey from Carlisle Barracks to Fort Pierre in the Dakotas, where a war with the Sioux was in progress.

In September of that year Colonel William S. Harney, leading a force of infantry, artillery and dragoons clashed with Sioux in a major battle at Ash Hollow. Captain John Todd of the 6th Infantry vivdly described one phase of the fight:

". . . a warrior dashed out from the crowd and approaching us, rode down the line a full speed parallel to it, and distant about 300 yards. Poor fellow! What hope of escape for him, what chance to come off scatheless from the Hundred Minnies levelled upon him. . . Did he die? *Quien Sabe!* . . . we poured a plunging fire upon (the others) with our long range rifles. . . ."

IN THE summer of 1855 the Ord-

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nance Department had decided upon 58 as the caliber for a new series of Minie rifles and there was no reason why the older Mississippis could not be altered accordingly: Reaming the 54 caliber barrel with its seven-groove rifling up to 58, then cutting into the bore the new three-groove decreasing-depth rifling for the Minie bullet.

It was a comparatively simple operation and by the fall of 1855 Harper's Ferry was busily performing it.

But despite the adoption of the new caliber, a number of Mississippis were never rebored. Thus the Model 1841s in service by the close of 1856 could be in caliber 58 with new sights, in caliber 54 with new sights, or in their original state with no alterations whatsoever, although by that time nearly all of them used the Minie bullet instead of the patched ball.

An early example of an "officer's rifle," carried across the plains about 1857 by Dabney Maury of the U.S. Mounted Rifles, was almost certainly based on a rebored Model 1841 barrel.

As Maury described it: "My rifle was a three-grooved Harper's Ferry barrel, mounted by the gunsmith at Carlisle in a common shotgun stock, with a wooden ramrod and horn sights. One day I surprised (a wagonmaster) by cutting down a fine antelope at a great distance. I told him to step it off, because his legs were long and would leave no occasion of cavail at short measure. (He) paced four hundred and seventy-five paces to the antelope."

WHETHER it fired the Minie bullet or patched ball, the Mississippi continued to be a popular item with frontier dwellers. Between 1855 and 1861 advertisements for it periodically appeared in such western papers as the San Antonio Herald, the St. Louis Missouri Democrat, and the New Orleans Picayune.

And in all probablitly, some of the "Minie Rifles" offered between 1855 and 1858 by dealers in St. Louis, Memphis and San Francisco were Mississippis, either modified or in their orginal configuration.

In July 1860, Lietenant Colonel C.F. Smith, then at Camp Floyd, Utah Territory, wrote that because of local Indian disturbances he had provided the Pony Express agent there with "Sixty (60) 'Mississippi' rifles, and some ammunition for the same, on the condition of their being returned in good order, or paid if not".

Although the Army had adopted a new Maynard-primed rifle and rifle-musket in 1855 and started issuing them in 1857, the Model 1841 remained in service with them through the Civil War. During that conflict it continued to see action on the frontier with such units as the 1st Colorado Cavalry, 1st New Mexico Cavalry and the California Battalion of Mountaineers. Even after the war, in fact, it saw occasional service with civilians on the plains.

For example, an inventory of the effects of a Colorado settler taken early in 1877 included a double-barreled shotgun and a "Mississippi Rifle".

Big Lawmen

By BILL O'NEAL

WHAT surely was the most physically intimidating force of old West peace officers operated from the sheriff's office of Mariposa County, Arizona, in 1907.

The sheriff was Carl Hayden, who stood six feet and weighed 220 pounds. Hayden's undersheriff was C.B. Wood, another six-footer who topped the scales at 225 pounds.

Deputy sheriff Wayne Davis stood an inch or so over six feet, and also weighed 220 pounds. Deputy sheriff Jeff Adams was the tallest man on the staff, but at 200 pounds he was a bit lankier than his beefy companions.

In an age when most men were considerably smaller than Americans of the 1980s, Sheriff Hayden and his three associates towered over the average malefactor and weighed in at an aggregate of 865 pounds. Each of the four officers wore a big single-action .45 Colt, but their imposing physiques must have been an adequate deterrent to most would-be hardcases in and around Phoenix in 1907.

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Scenes from this year's rendezvous in California's Tehachapi Mountains.

Mountain Man Rendezvous

By BARBARA MEEHAN
Photos Courtesy Author

SIOUX tepees dot the landscape showing splashes of plain whites or colorful Indian designs. Outside one of the lodges, dressed in buckskins and a critter hat, sporting a beard, is an old mountain man. He bends over an open fire stirring the contents of a cast iron pot.

Zuni stew! The delicious aroma floats through the crisp air and mingles with the sweet smell of fry bread and venison from nearby fires.

Bargaining takes place as traders display their goods. Brilliant beads, turquoise, silver, skins of all sorts, tomahawks and just about anything a person needs to survive in the mountains can be obtained for currency or trade.

Meanwhile, mountain men, women and children gather together. Excitement fills the air. Black powder guns sparkle in the sun as their owners take aim. A thundering blast echoes through the mountains leaving a trail of smoke. The shoot has begun!

Although it could easily be 1834, the year is 1984. The scene is the Peter Le Bec rendezvous in the Tehachapi mountain range of California, sponsored by the Bakersfield Muzzle Loaders.

There always was an interest in black powder shooting, but it has been widely publicized in the past ten years. People from all walks of life attend rendezvous throughout the nation, some as members of black powder clubs and

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Mountain Man-style living is becoming a favorite American past-time.

others as "free trappers."

THE first American rendezvous was assembled by William H. Ashley in the summer of 1825 at Henry's Fork on the Green River. There his Rocky Mountain Fur Company was joined by a Hudson's Bay Company group, free trappers and Indians.

Each summer until the 1840s, trappers left their camps to trade with pack outfits from St. Louis who delivered equipment, supplies, trade goods and liquor in return for the trappers' furs.

Although Ashley neglected to bring liquor the first year, he remembered the next and the rendezvous became one continuous scene of drunkenness, gambling, brawling and fighting—as long as the trappers' money and credit lasted.

After a long winter spent setting new camps and a fall and spring trapping and following beaver, by the time summer came, the men were ready to cut loose and spend money on the goods from St. Louis.

Today's rendezvous is an attempt to re-enact those earlier days of American history. At Le Bec, as at many others, there is a non-primitive section allowing campers, tents and any convenience of the 20th Century.

It is in the primitive area, however, where many hardy souls do away with 20th Century equipment and step back into the 19th Century. They use tepees, lean-tos, fires started with flint and they wear authentic clothing.

Jugs are passed, a piper plays his bagpipes, the sun silently slips away as candle lanterns are lighted and tepees glow from fires within. A whole new world emerges. Highland flings, soft songs, loud songs, jokes, crazy mountain men and on the last night at one camp, which drew a surprisingly large crowd, a belching contest, with beer and radishes readily available for all participants.

Jugs appear filled with apple pie, northern lights, and angel's breath (not to mention the straight stuff). Apple pie. Angel's breath. They taste just like they sound. Sweet and delicious. But beware! The kiss of the angel or a taste of that pie and one begins to believe it really is the 1800s and the tepee is home.

The pipes play faster and the flings get higher. Then, slowly, one by one, people drift, or in some cases, drag themselves back to their lodges or lean-tos and into their bed rolls.

Attending a rendezvous gives a black powder lover an opportunity to toss aside suit and tie and escape the office, or some other mundane part of life. Like the trapper of yesteryear, one can cut loose, allowing the alter ego complete freedom, then return back to the real world with batteries recharged.

William Ashley would be proud to know that the spirit of the old rendezvous is still alive and going strong!

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Wild Old Days

She faced the Cheyenne alone

By ROY MEADOR

ON the western frontier generosity often begat generosity and a tiny seed sometimes reaped a surprising harvest. The tradition of giving and sharing was strong in the American West where hospitality, cooperation, and a helping hand were sometimes essential for survival.

Those who had little, whether whites or Indians, typically gave freely of the little they had. The recipients of generosity might be total strangers, but no matter. For instance, take the time Ada Reed's dipper gourd brought her a Cheyenne Indian pony.

IN the 1890s, the Reeds of Texas herded their cattle north to the grazing lands, lush and free, in the Granite Mountain area of southwestern Oklahoma Territory. Lee Reed and his brother Doc were cattlemen who roamed wide with their herds in patient quest of free grass.

They cherished the unstaked, unfenced grasslands of Oklahoma, which they shared peacefully with wandering Indian tribes. Later the Reeds' pursuit of grass and broad horizons took them deeper West to New Mexico Territory in the San Jose area.

The Reeds constructed roomy earth dugouts for two families south of Granite, in what is now Oklahoma. Those dugouts were typical territorial homes of the last decade of the 19th Century. Doc Reed, his wife Retha, and their youngsters occupied one dugout, with grazing for Doc's cattle nearby. Lee Reed, his wife Ada, and their three kids, Minnie, Osie and Kenneth, had a dugout in another part of the range.

The Reeds were westerners who didn't like to be crowded and their scattered herds also made it logical to have their family dugouts widely separated. Shouts couldn't span the distance, but gunfire carried and communicated effectively between the dugouts if help was needed.

Ada Reed in later years.

The Reeds' cattle were lean, tough longhorns. The aim was to bulk them up with the wild grass of the Territory that as yet had known no plow. In later years, Ada Reed told her children and then her grandchildren, including the author, how the mountains were hazy with heat one noon in late spring, how the hills were radiant to the point of drunkenness with wild flowers and new grass.

STARTING at dawn that day, Ada busied herself with the countles chores of a frontier wife. For her family, Ada was butcher, baker, candlestickmaker, tailor, teacher, counsellor, housekeeper, sweeper, cook, soap maker, bottle washer, pediatrician and family physician.

These were just a few of her daily professions and necessity made Ada an expert. There wasn't a minute to waste if the tasks of the day were to be done. She cleaned, sewed, made sourdough, jerked beef, scoured the vicinity for edible plants such as lamb's quarter greens or berries.

That morning she also improvised herb tea for Osie who was ailing and she urged Minnie and Kenneth, the baby, to stay out from underfoot by playing outdoors in the sunshine.

Ada was too busy with her chores to witness the sudden and silent approach of a large Indian party. All at once they were there, astride their wiry Indian ponies, surrounding the dugout and staring at the unexpected residence of a white family on their hunting ground.

With a start, Ada became conscious of the mounted visitors. They were "quiet as stones and still as fate," she reported. They stared at her expressionlessly. "Inside," Ada said to Minnie. "Take Ken with you." The little girl obeyed, pulling her brother with her, though she was sorry to miss what promised to be an exciting adventure. But her mother's tone was urgent and unmistakable, allowing no debate.

Ada slowly and with no sign of fear followed her children into the dugout and pulled the canvas and wood door shut behind her.

Where was Lee Reed? She wasn't sure. He wasn't likely to be very close. He had ridden south early looking for strays, expecting to return sometime in the afternoon. She couldn't count on his arrival.

And with a dozen armed Indians waiting, she didn't want her husband to return. If the Indians meant trouble, Lee would be one man against a dozen. Impossible odds.

"Keep your distance, Lee Reed," was her silent prayer on one side of her thinking. But the other side, the scared side, wanted him to come at once with a peaceful way to satisfy the Indians and keep them friendly.

THE surprise guests were a Cheyenne

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Ada and Lee Reed in pioneer Oklahoma.

hunting party. When the woman disappeared into her dugout, the Cheyennes made no bellicose sounds or angry gestures. It was a big country and they were in a cheerful mood. Fiction and fable have pictured the Cheyenne as generally eager for a fight; but in the main, unless pushed, cheated or cornered they were a live-and-let-live people.

Ada, with her children close, watched the Indians through a crack in the door. They dismounted and one after another began a strange, boisterous dance around the dugout. The dance was playful rather than warlike. They seemed in good spirits.

Rising in tempo and frenzy, the dance continued several minutes. Ada was frightened and amused. She wasn't certain which emotion was appropriate under the circumstances.

The Indians carried a variety of weapons, rifles, pistols, bows and arrows and knives. Ada had a loaded Winchester in the dugout, but it was worse than useless against this large party. Clearly the occasion called for statesmanship and diplomacy.

If she made a bad move or if the Indians turned destructive through greed or anger, she and her three children could become four more victims of America's western migration.

Ada reached a decision. She showed the spunk that often was demanded of western women. "Stay here," she ordered Minnie and the boys. "Whatever happens don't come outside."

She searched the dugout for something to offer as a token of friendship. She did not have food sufficient for a band of 12. There were not enough clothes or trinkets to go around, even if the Indians would not be insulted by such offerings.

Desperate, she picked up a gourd she had saved to make a water dipper and she stepped from the dugout. The Indians halted their impromptu dance and gathered around the woman.

Ada silently ordered herself to keep calm. Holding the gourd in both hands, she extended it to an Indian who seemed to be leader. The Cheyenne, puzzled but interested, accepted the gourd. Using signs, Ada indicated that she hadn't enough provisions on hand to feed them.

The Indian with the gourd smiled and waved it toward his fellows. He shook the gourd as if it possessed magic and his companions laughed. With relief, Ada saw that the men were still amiable, even grateful.

About then her husband appeared at a gallop. Reed topped a nearby hill and took in the situation at a glance. Unable to judge properly what was happening, he spurred his mount forward. He was apprehensive. If the Indians were bent on mischief, perhaps his arrival would distract them from his family and draw them away.

Reed galloped into the clearing to find the Indians laughing and his wife smiling. "You can bet your saddle I was nervous," she admitted. The Cheyennes remained cheerful as they milled about Reed when he arrived.

Reed and the Indians communicated in English, Cheyenne and sign language. "Good woman, brave woman," the Cheyenne conveyed. The Indians assured Reed that Ada had earned their gratitude and admiration. She showed no fear and she gave them her gourd.

The Cheyenne leader indicated that since the white woman had provided a gift, the Indians would repay her with a pony. Indian ponies were small, but they were noted for their endurance. A pony for a gourd was a remarkable exchange, even among Indians in the West; but that's how it was. To the Cheyenne, giving more than was given is an act of honor.

Ada Reed lost a dipper but gained an Indian pony and a tale of Oklahoma pioneer days that could be told repeatedly at Reed family gatherings in years to come. The tale is still good to hear because it shows the human side of the West with a smile instead of a fight, an exchange of gifts rather than an exchange of blows. It shows peace, friendship, and generosity between whites and Indians at a time when the grass was free for all and all could freely roam.

TRAILS GROWN DIM

(continued from page 49)

Union County, South Carolina. His children were Robert, Hannah Fowler, Asa, Mary Fowler, Rachel Tindall, Sarah, and John; his wife was Mary. His son John had Jane C. Costner. Who are John and Margaret Tindall's other children?

Jane C. Costner was in Lumpkin County, Georgia, Aug. 18, 1848. She appointed Asa Tindell of Spartanburg District power of attorney to sell land. Asa Robert Costner was named for these Tindalls. I would appreciate any information.

I am also seeking the descendants of Alexander Reid, born in Scotland or Ireland in 1698, married Margaret McKay, born 1700 in Ireland. Most of their children were born in Ireland but the youngest may have been born in America, probably Virginia.

Hannah's grandparents were John Knox II, born Scotland or Ireland, and Jean Gracy, daughter of Jean Sinclair Gracy, a relative of John Knox the Scottish Reformer and distant relation to her son-in-law, John Knox I.

Robert Knox Bell, who married Dorothy Cynthia Dougherty, was named for his grandfather Robert Knox.—**Elbert E. Covington, Box 166, Rt. 1, Desoto, IL 62924.**

Escalante

We have news about members of our family since 1536, when they went to the United States, primarily to California—Escalante River.

We also have information about the first viceroy of Mexico (New Spain). We like genealogy and can provide information or exchange it with you.—**Francisco Rivera, Apdo. 10-689, Mexico 11000, Mexico D.F.**

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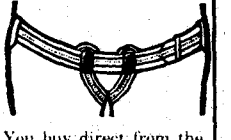

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Kerrville, Texas—
HOME OF THE COWBOY

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Opposite page: Interior of the spacious Cowboy Artists of America Museum is designed as a showcase and permanent home for the CAA organization. Above, exterior view of the Kerrville, Texas, museum. Note natural construction materials that were used.

ARTISTS OF AMERICA

By JUDY ALTER

November 1984

Photos Courtesy Cowboy Artists of America Museum

THERE'S a new monument to Frederic Remington and Charles Russell down in the hill country of central Texas. Oh, it's not a carved stone nor a bronze marker. It's a museum, new, large and impressive, devoted to cowboy art.

The Cowboy Artists of America Museum sits on ten acres just outside Kerrville. Opened in April 1983, it is the only museum in this contry devoted to displaying the work of living painters and sculptors known as Western American realists or, more popularly, cowboy artists.

Cowboy art, the literature tells you, is a generic term for the paintings and sculpture depicting the American West as it was and is. That makes these artists the inheritors of the tradition established by Remington and Russell. It's a heritage they acknowledge with pride.

No more appropriate place could be found for this museum than the hilly country where the cattle drives of the last century originated. Here the cattle began the long trip north to railhead and market, and here the cowboy began the trail drive that eventually made him the central American myth. It's brushy country, the kind the Texas longhorn thrived in. Today, it is picturesque country, the perfect setting for a museum planned to blend into its surroundings.

CONSTRUCTION of the museum was designed to reflect the dual heritage of the hill country—the Spanish culture and the cowboy tradition. Built of native fieldstone, copper, adobe tiles and plastered walls, the museum resembles a huge hacienda. Heavy timbers and stack stone retaining walls frame an entry garden.

A dramatic main entrance features a ceiling of 18 boveda brick domes, a construction technique rarely seen outside of fine old Mexican buildings. In boveda domes, a light Mexican brick is positioned without supporting wires or forms. Only a handful of artisans from Mexico still construct these domes which date to the Moorish invasion of Spain.

From this dramatic entry, the visitor walks to a courtyard gallery off which branch the bookshop, offices and library. The museum's main gallery, 100 feet by 30 feet with a 17-foot ceiling, faces the courtyard gallery. Its floors are of mesquite trunks, cut into slices, square glued together, and polished.

On exhibit here, on a rotating basis,

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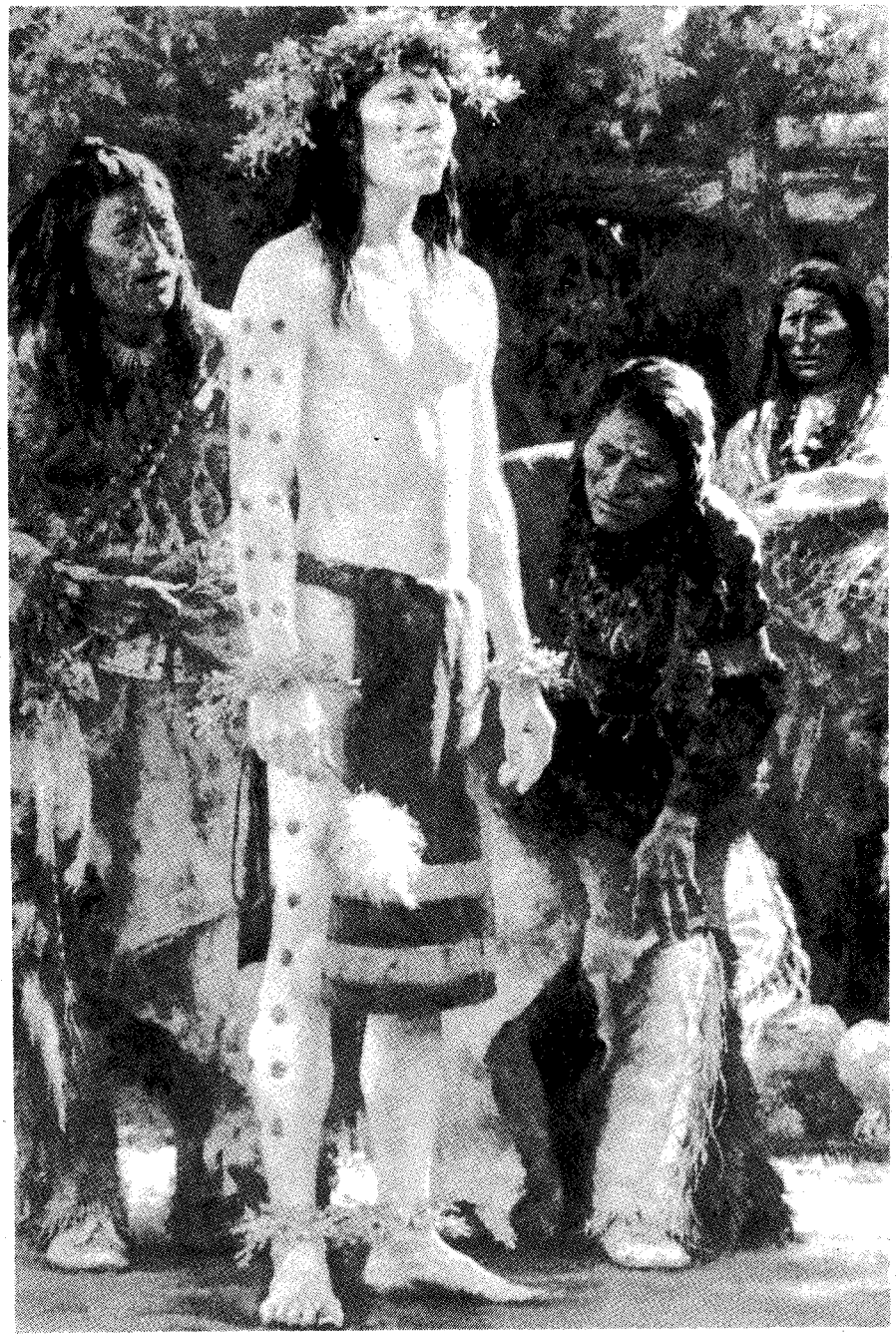

"Preparing for the Sundance," an oil painting by CAA member Howard Terpning, 1980.

are the works of both living and deceased members of CAA. If two new paintings arrive one day, they are hung the next day, replacing two that have been on display for some time. Most often, works are sent on loan by private collectors.

This "going public" with private works is one of the museum's main functions. Too often, the work of these artists goes directly from artist's studio to collector's private gallery and is never seen by the public.

IN addition to the main gallery, there are two smaller galleries and a lecture gallery with audio and visual equipment for demonstrations. On display recently in one of these smaller galleries were 53 hydrocal epoxy resin bronzes by emeritus member Bob Scriver. Representing the history of the Blackfeet, the display was entitled "No More Buffalo" and was typical of the special displays exhibited in the museum.

The permanent collection includes several paintings and bronzes by members, most donated by collectors including some of the founding sponsors of the museum. The collection also includes one bronze by Charles Russell, and museum officials hope to increase, through donations, the number of Russells and Remingtons in the permanent collection.

The museum also houses a store which sells posters, prints, gifts and books, including *Visions West*, a four-part book by newspaperman Don Dedera which details the history of the CAA, the story of the museum and the background of American western art in words and in 25 color plates.

Outdoors, the grounds are landscaped with terraced patios, native live oak and red oak trees—perfect settings for outdoor demonstrations and lectures in the magnificent hill country.

And on down the hill, there's a unique touch insisted on by CAA members—a cottage and working studio for visiting artists. The studio fits in with another major purpose of the museum: Education.

From time to time, various CAA members take up residence in the cottage to teach students interested in western American realism. Fritz White, who won Best of Show in the last CAA show in Phoenix, taught sculpture to a class of 19 in the fall; Harvey Johnson and Mel Warren conducted a critique class in which Warren did a painting for the students; Ken Riley in April taught a multimedia design class.

The classes generally last one week and are free but registration is limited. Promising and serious young art students are juried for admission. For the Johnson/Warren class, 20 of 50 applicants were accepted.

THE visiting artist's studio is named for the late Robert Lougheed, a longtime CAA member. It houses his artistic equipment—easels, brushes, bottles and paint tubes—along with unfinished paintings, all donated by Lougheed's widow. Eventually, however, this material will be on exhibit in the main building.

The museum serves as a permanent home for CAA, an organization which began almost 20 years ago in a small cafe in an Arizona town. Artists Joe Beeler, Charlie Dye, George Phippen and John Hampton decided to form a social and professional organization. They shared a strong conviction that the history and culture of the American West must be preserved in art.

The formation of the group received little national attention, but other artists soon expressed interest in the new organization, artists from all parts of the country. Then as now, membership in the group depended less on geographical location than on talent.

One member, Fred Fellows, expressed it by saying, "You don't have to be a cowboy to paint good western art, but

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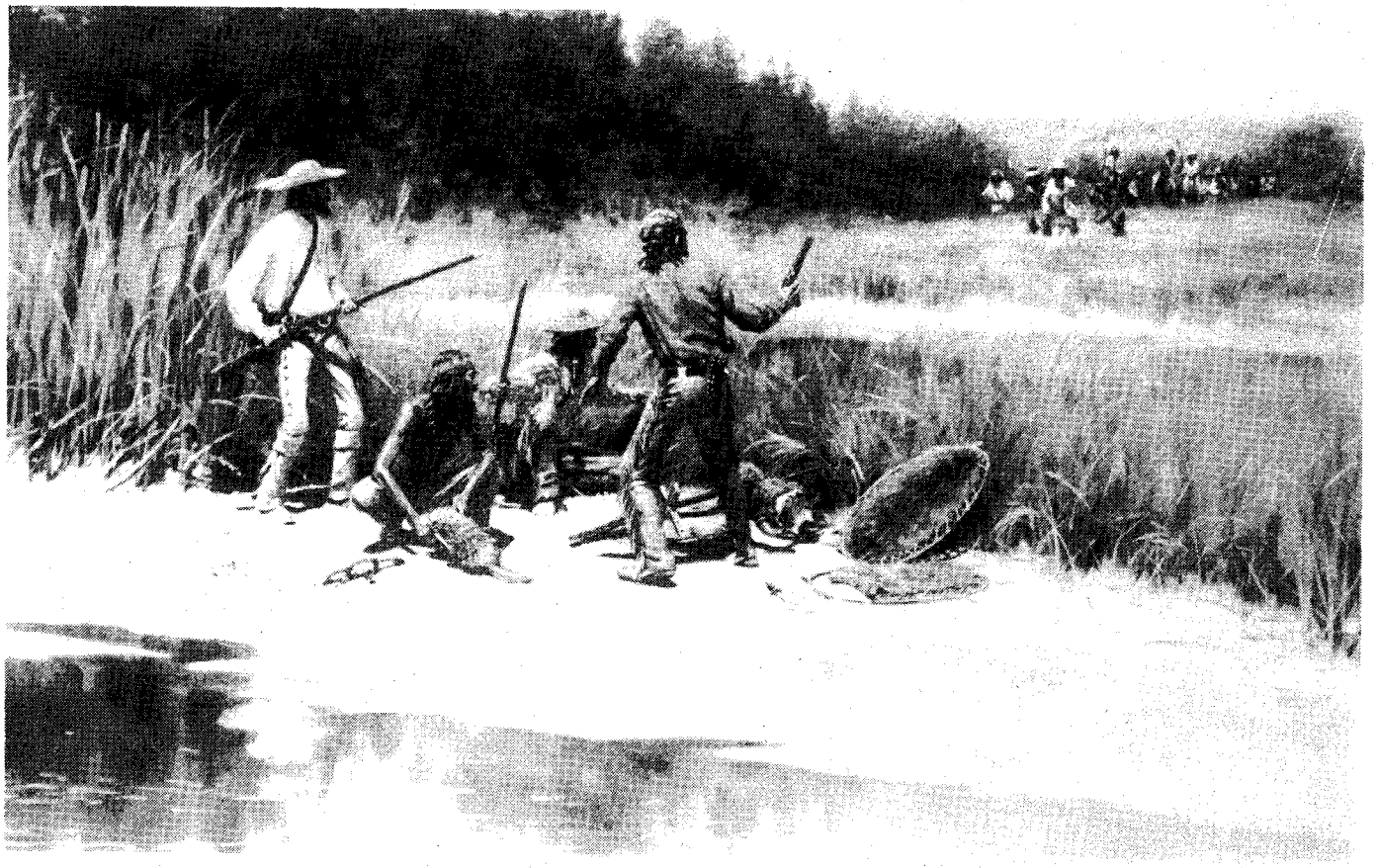

This painting, "Trouble on the Rio Del Norte," by Harvey Johnson, 1979, CAA member, is housed at the museum in Kerrville, Texas.

I think you have to want to be a cowboy."

The first CAA show was held in 1966 at the then-new Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City. Fifteen artists were represented and sales reached $49,000. In 1973, the CAA moved its annual show to Phoenix, where it remains even with operation of the new museum.

In 1980, members of the group were invited to exhibit at the 91st Salon of the Societe des Artistes Independants at the Grand Palais in Paris. It was an impressive invitation, from a group whose founders include Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec and Seurat. In 1981, members of the CAA were represented at the American Western Art Exhibit in Peking.

TODAY, the Cowboy Artists of America is a prestigious organization of thirty members. Like artists who first discovered the American West—Bierstadt, Catlin, Moran, Remington—they are not necessarily cowboys nor are they westerners. Most now live in the West—Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming, Montana and California—but their origins reach to

"Opening of the Thunder Pipe," a sculpture done by Montana artist Bob Scriver. The Thunder Pipe opening ceremony may be likened to the fertility rites of other primitive people.

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Main Gallery of Cowboy Artists of America Museum which opened in 1983 in Kerrville, Texas. The 100-foot-long room has a 17-foot-high ceiling.

Brooklyn, New York City, Iowa, even the deep South of Georgia.

Individual members have studied art at such institutions as the Chicago Art Institute, the Ecole de Beaux Arts of Montreal and the Pratt Institute. They also have studied in the deserts, prairies and mountains of the American West and their work has commanded prices that frequently stun the art world.

Professionalism is nicely balanced with camaraderie in this group. An annual trail ride takes members to a locale of special artistic interest, offering a double opportunity for artistic study and observation and some easy sharing of ideas with artists of the same concerns and interests.

They have visited the YO Ranch in Kerrville and the O6 between Alpine and Fort Davis. But whether it's a trail ride or a nationally publicized show, the emphasis in this organization is on quality and authenticity, the rigid standards for membership. Not for CAA the artist who is careless about Indian costume or paints a horse in an impossibly contorted position. Membership is by invitation only.

Members of the CAA are: Joe Beeler, Sedonia, Arizona; James Boren, Clifton, Texas; Gary Carter, West Yellowstone, Montana; John Clymer, Teton Village, Wyoming; Robert Duncan, Midway, Utah; Fred Fellows, Big Fork, Montana; John Hampton, Scottsdale, Arizona; E.E. "Bud" Helbig, Kalispell, Montana; Harvey W. Johnson, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Mehl Lawson, Bonita, California; George Marks, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Frank McCarthy, Sedonia, Arizona; William Moyers, Albuquerque, New Mexico; Bill Nebeker, Prescott, Arizona; Gary Niblett, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Bill Owen, Flagstaff, Arizona; Frank Polk, Mayer, Arizona; Kenneth Riley, Tuscon, Arizona; Tom Ryan, Stamford, Texas; Gordon Snidow, Ruidoso, New Mexico; Grant Speed, Lindon, Utah; J.N. Swanson, Carmel Valley, California; Howard Terpning, Tucson, Arizona; Melvin Warren, Clifton, Texas; and Fritz White, Loveland, Colorado.

Emeritus members are: Nick Eggenhofer, Tom Lovell, R. Brownell McGrew, Bob Scriver, and Donald Teague.

Several categories of museum membership are available. An individual membership, at $24, includes free admission and a ten percent discount in the museum store and on fees for programs. A family membership, at $50, includes free admission for all family members and the same ten percent discount. For $100 "Family" members and $250 "Supporting" members, the discount goes on up to 15 percent.

There are categories for benefactors, sustaining members and lifetime patrons--the latter includes special invitations to functions prior to exhibitions and receptions.

More details are available by writing the museum at 1550 Bandera Highway, Box 1716, Kerrville, Texas 78028. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. During peak visitor months of June, July and August, it is also open Mondays.

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PIONEERS TALKED TURKEY

(continued from page 33)

RECIPES

Roasted Wild Turkey With Herbed-Cornbread Stuffing

A dressed wild turkey, about 12 lbs., fresh or frozen with giblets
Salt pork, ¾ to 1 lb.
A loaf of cornbread
Dried herbs, about ⅓ c., including ¼ c. sage
Pepper
Flour, ½ c. all-purpose

Simmer giblets in sauce pan in 3 c. water. After 10 minutes remove liver; continue simmering the rest for about an hour.

Break cornbread fine in a bowl. Add enough water to moisten, squeeze bread. Cut salt pork into thin slices and chop half fine. Chop liver fine. Crush sage and other herbs. Stir seasonings into bread with pepper.

Preheat oven to 325° F. Rinse bird and pat dry. Pack stuffing loosely.

Grease the pan and bird with salt pork. Shake coating of flour over the skin, to seal it and enrich the gravy. Place the turkey breast up in the pan. Slip two slices of pork under the roast and place two slices on the breast. Place in the oven. (For excellent results start the turkey with its breast down and turn it after an hour.)

After 1 hour pour 1 c. water over the turkey and dust it again with flour. After 2 hours raise the temperature to 350° and baste the roast well with pan liquid. Continue to baste every 20 minutes, adding water as needed.

Meanwhile remove the giblet broth from stove to cool. Set aside the heart and gizzard. Use some of the liquid to make 2 tablespoons of flour into a paste in a cup. Gradually blend the paste into the broth.

At 3 hours begin testing the turkey for doneness. An old cookbook says "A sure test is the readiness of the joints to separate from the body."

Remove the turkey to a warm platter. Skim any clear fat (save) from pan. Stir broth into pan; loosen particles there. Heat until the liquid thickens. Season and put into a serving bowl.

Old West Recipe of the Month

Pioneer coffee was made of many ingredients, none of which resembled a coffee bean. From Jean and Rich Peterson, Box 179, Rural Route 2, Correctionville, IA 51016, is a recipe that her family took from Kentucky in the late 1800s to Iowa. Also interesting is that Jean is related to that notorious but "perky" outlaw Belle Starr.

PRIVATION COFFEE

6 c. of bran
3 c. of cornmeal
1 c. molasses
1 t. salt
2 eggs

Brown in oven after mixing together. Let dry. Perk as coffee. You'll probably be glad that Arbuckles won the West!

TRULY WESTERN

(continued from page 11)

Western Poetry

Thank you for a fine magazine I've been enjoying for quite a number of years. I'd like to express my sentiments by an unknown poet as follows:

May your horse never stumble
Your spurs never rust,
May your guts never grumble
Your cinch never rust!
May your boots never pinch
Your crops never fail,
While you eat lots of beans
And stay out of jail.

—D.E. McClay, 1517 Jolliff Rd., Chesapeake, VA 23321.

Met Robert Scott

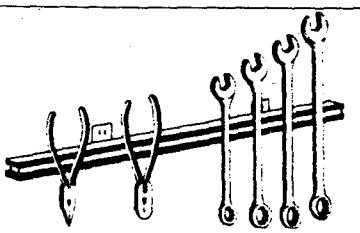
As a westernized Minnesotan I've always been interested in your magazine, having started buying them off the newstands after returning from Korea. As a regular subscriber I've never missed the magazine.

I was interested in the Reel Cowboys section as you used to have a movie vignette section on the same subject.

This recalled the summer of 1975. I was visiting a friend of a friend in Weaversville, California; we went to another house where I met a sheriff's captain introduced as Bob Scott. After studying the gentleman I inquired if we had met before, he said maybe I had known him as Robert "L." Scott. I had read of this old time movie cowboy and found him to be quite a nice person. I have since heard he has died.

I've converted quite a few people to your magazine, keep up the quality!—**Don M. Bentson, 2940 Concord Dr., Carson City, NV 89702.**

Your letters and comments are welcome. Please keep letters to 300 words or less. All letters received by TRUE WEST will be considered for publication unless otherwise stipulated in the letter. Space does not permit us to print all letters we receive. Be sure to include full name, address and zip code. Photos welcome. Address all letters to TRUE WEST, P.O. Box 665, Perkins, OK 74059.



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THE WILD SIDE OF LIFE IN THE OLD WEST

"A Tragic Nickname"

By H. Franklin Greene

At the beginning of the Civil War near Rock Creek Station on The Overland Trail in the Nebraska Territory, there lived a widow with her two young sons, Jack, 12, and Andy, 9. Both boys had to perform men's jobs to help support their mother.

One of these jobs was to hoe corn and potatoes for neighboring farmers. For this work, they were paid a pittance. However, it was the only job available in their community and they eagerly sought out anyone who would employ them.

Rock Creek Station was an independently owned Wagon and Horse Exchange and Repair Station -- so necessary to the Overland Express Company to transport goods and equipment to the western territories. It was owned by a large, handsome man from North Carolina who was a Confederate sypathizer named McCanles.

The express company sent to the Rock Creek Station one of its young drovers, who recently was injured by a bear. Here he was assigned light duties during his recovery period.

Some claimed that the young man was lazy and ill-tempered and neglected the stock. As a result, he was constantly in an argument with his superiors. Others said his temperament was due to a long, slender nose with an over-hanging upper lip that resembled a duck's bill. Consequently, McCanles nicknamed him, "Duck Bill."

This nickname distressed him greatly since his physical features were slim, girlish and well-proportioned. (Many years later, General Armstrong Custer's wife, Elizabeth, described him: "A delight to look upon as if every muscle was perfection.")

Due to his girlish figure and curled hair, McCanles also referred to the young man as a hermaphrodite. According to letters the young man wrote to his family, he could have been one, i.e.: One letter dated August 23, 1858 in reference to his hairdresser - quote in part: "She would not cut it off for she thinks a grate (sic) deal of it I-I at least she is always comming and curling it I-I that is when I am hare (sic)."

Duck Bill never fathered a child that any actual records reveal. However, late in life he did marry a masculine-looking circus performer and spent only a few days with her on their honeymoon. Some believe this was only a financial arrangement.

One day as the two young brothers were on their way to a neighboring farm, they had occasion to pass the stables where Duck Bill was sitting beside a gate post. Little Andy, in all respect to his elders, called out, "Howdy, Mr. Duck Bill." The young stable tender flew into a rage and started to run after the small boy. Terrified, Andy dropped his hoe and ran for his life. Duck Bill picked up the hoe and chased the young lad for some distance. Having caught up to him, he hit Andy on the head. The blow proved fatal.

As the boy lay dying, his brother, Jack, ran to his side and tried to comfort him, as well as administer help. However, it was of no use. Little Andy was dead. Jack cried out in anguish -- sobbing words to Duck Bill: "I'll kill you when I grow up."

Nebraska Territory in 1861 had no real law. Consequently, Duck Bill was never arrested or brought to justice for this crime. The widow made frantic efforts to have something done about little Andy's killing. However, with the entire country in heated discussions over the slavery question and the Civil War, little attention was paid to her pleas.

Duck Bill now was really in disfavor with his superior. Knowing full well that the law was non-existent, and his being a Union sympathizer (his birth place was Troy, LaSalle County, Illinois), he became even more belligerent. He was also aware that his physical body was no match for McCanles. So he waited for his chance, which he knew would eventually come.

As the war between the States began to gain momentum, and control over his workers more difficult, it became necessary for McCanles to sell his Wagon and Relay Rock Creek Station to the owners of the Overland Express Company. There are no records that he was forced to sell, but the Contract was 1/3 down and the balance due three months later. After waiting several months for the past due payments, McCanles with his small son and two neighbors went to inquire about the default in payments. Duck Bill and two of the newly assigned operators of the station slew the three unarmed men and chased the small lad some distance, who was forunate to escape.

A warrant was issued for Duck Bill. (Note: the spelling on several documents were spelled by mistake, as was written "Dutch Bill and Duch Bill.") To the historian, this is ample evidence his nickname was known by the community. A $25 bond was set, but Duck Bill was never convicted or actually tried.

Fifteen years later, on Aug. 3, 1876 at 2 p.m. in Deadwood, South Dakota, Judge W.L. Kuyendall asked Jack, now a grown, young man, if he had anything to say before the jury returned their verdict for having killed one of the West's most notorious gunmen. Leaping to his feet, he shouted: "Yes, you're danged right I've got plenty to say. Years ago at Rock Creek that killer, Hickok, killed my younger brother, Andy, with a hoe. I swore then and there that I'd kill Wild Bill for it, and I have. I've been following him around for years just waiting for the right chance.

Much has been written, but nothing much has ever been credited to the motive of Jack McCall in his killing of Wild Bill Hickok. At McCall's trial, his employer, M. P. Smith, and many Deadwood citizens testified of his good character and also spoke of the malevolent and vicious character of Wild Bill.

The prosecutor was a Colonel named May who tried every conceivable trick to convict McCall. A jury of 12 men, selected from the town's many citizens, authorized the jury forman, Mr. Charles Whitehead, to read their decision as requested by Judge Kuyendall: "Deadwood City, August 3, 1876. We the jury find the prisoner, Mr. John McCall, not guilty." The prosecutor, Colonel May, was livid with anger at the jury for their verdict of acquittal.

Wild Bill, a.k.a. Duck Bill, and James B. Hickok, was dead and buried. But destiny awaited Jack McCall. Colonel May swore to see him hang. He began by having a lawless crony of the dead Wild Bill run him out of town. He also had him arrested in Cheyenne and charged with the same murder of Wild Bill. Colonel May contacted Wild Bill's wife, Agnes Lake, but she refused to compensate him for his vendetta and hatred.

An incredible injustice to McCall was arranged: For example, a fictitious family from Louisville, Kentucky was fabricated to prove him a liar about his motive to kill for revenge. This was unsuccessful. Many witnesses suddenly appeared to convict McCall. The courts apparently looked the other way. McCall was tried for a second time and found guilty. The United States was also guilty of double jeopardy to an American citizen. Yankton was no more civilized than Deadwood.

McCall was of the Catholic faith, and his priest was understandably upset over the second trial. Even after many visits, McCall still held to his motive. The Daily Leader Newspapaer reported on Aug. 31, 1876, that McCall easily recognized Wild Bill as the one who killed his brother. McCall knew the deck was stacked. He wrote a friend a farewell forever on this earth. His last words were: "Oh, God" as he fell through the trap door.

Colonel May did not witness McCall's hanging. He suddenly had become ill, died and was buried before the trap was sprung on McCall.

*TRUE WEST is aware that this account does not agree with other accounts of Hickok's life, principally Joseph G. Rosa's *They Called Him Wild Bill.*

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